THE REDEMPTION OF RELIGION

CHARLES CARGILL

St Deiniol's Library

Ex Libris

Lt. Col. John Burton Grier
Salvation Army Bequest

Cancelled from
Gladstone's Library
04 JUL 2024

Llyfrgell Deiniol Sant

JOHN GRIER.

# THE REDEMPTION OF RELIGION

# THE REDEMPTION OF RELIGION

BY

CHARLES GARDNER

AUTHOR OF 'VISION AND VESTURE: A STUDY OF WILLIAM BLAKE IN MODERN THOUGHT,' 'THE INNER LIFE OF GEORGE ELIOT,' 'WILLIAM BLAKE, THE MAN'

*'The best wine is the oldest, the best water the newest.'*
WILLIAM BLAKE

LONGMANS, GREEN, AND CO.
39 PATERNOSTER ROW, LONDON
FOURTH AVENUE & 30TH STREET, NEW YORK
BOMBAY, CALCUTTA, AND MADRAS
1919

*All rights reserved*

21.5
43

C5323

TO

THE VENERABLE ARCHDEACON LILLEY

# PREFACE

THERE are various attitudes that people to-day take towards the Higher Criticism of the Bible. The severely orthodox, of whatever school, see in it the master-stroke of Satan, once subtly hidden and calculated to catch even the elect, now openly demonstrated to be the devil's work by the downfall of the German Empire. Some, going to the other extreme, anxiously await the latest higher-critical word from Germany or France, and are tormented lest they should be supposed to believe in anything that is not perfectly new. There is a middle position. Some of us believe that the Higher Criticism has a positive value if we can only get at it. This book is my attempt to extract what I suppose to be its value.

Higher Criticism does not stand alone. It goes hand in hand with what is called Modernism. It is a theological attempt to be at one with the spirit of the age. It succeeds perfectly only at the price of ceasing to be catholic; for the catholic spirit can only live in so far as it transcends any particular age. The value of critical modernism lies in the one aspect that it has seized of the person of Jesus; its grand mistake is when it supposes that it has captured the whole Jesus.

Those who have waded through the long German lives of Jesus must often have wished, as I have, that the vast accumulations of extraneous matter could be melted down, and nothing but the outline of the story of Jesus left. Even in Schweitzer one loses the thread of the story by the repeated digressions. It occurred to me that if I could get at the higher-critical residuum, and tell the story of Jesus on that only, there might arise a fresh light on Jesus, which would be criticism's positive contribution.

This is what I have done in Chapters III and IV. Whatever value the Jesus of criticism may have, it necessarily remains partial. It is a side-light which must not oust all other lights, but may stay only if one among many. Here I am following New Testament precedent, where there is no attempt in any one book to portray the whole Jesus. The four Evangelists are each intent on one aspect, and nothing is more astonishing than their austere self-control in omitting words and deeds of Jesus that are outside of their particular purpose. The remaining letters and books are still intent on aspects, and therefore while a partial Jesus is found in each Gospel and Epistle, the whole Jesus lives only in the whole New Testament. A verbal harmony in the books is not attempted: a many-sided harmonious Jesus is reached. Critics reject much that does not harmonise verbally with their conclusions : we need reject nothing that completes our picture of Jesus. Following this method, we can accept all that is best in modernism without sacrificing anything of our larger catholic faith.

There have been many minds at work on criticism. As one studies them one becomes aware how subjective and arbitrary they usually are. This has made it difficult to decide just what is the residuum to which many critics would consent. I have trusted mainly to St Mark's Gospel, turning to St Matthew and St Luke only for supplemental touches, and to St John not at all. I have followed Schweitzer in placing the Transfiguration before Peter's confession, though I think the chief reason Schweitzer gives for his transposition invalid. I am indebted to him for interpreting sacramentally the feeding of the five thousand, and his teaching of the eschatological side of Christ's vision. But just here I have been forced to part company from him, for I cannot agree that Jesus thought only of the coming Kingdom. No doubt we, like Schweitzer, should find it difficult to discover an immanent text in the synoptics, since we may not use 'The Kingdom of God is within you' ; but that is only because Jesus, like the best psalmists and prophets before Him, took the present immanence of the Divine Kingdom for granted.

Again Schweitzer sacrifices everything to his theory of the Messianic secret. But the four Gospels are unanimous in their account of a great rejection. The Gospel story turns on the fact that Jesus was manifested to Israel as the Messiah, and Israel was guilty of the mortal national sin of

rejecting her King. The theory of the Messianic secret eats the heart out of the Gospel story : the manifested Messiah shatters the theory.

While acknowledging my debts, let me say how much help I have received from Dr Charles' work, *Eschatology, Hebrew, Jewish, and Christian.* Whatever accuracy may be found in my understanding and dates of the major and minor prophets in the second chapter is due to him.

The quotations from the Book of Enoch are from the admirable translation from the Ethiopic by Richard Lawrence, LL.D., Archbishop of Cashel.

In the second part of the book I have traced each fundamental doctrine back to some synoptic utterance of Jesus, and have tried to seize His point of view ; then I have tracked its passage through other minds, apostolic and historical, with a suggestion for its transvaluation in the immediate future if it is to be fruitful.

But here too my first thought has been to welcome every oblique light on the character of Jesus. It has been difficult to preserve the unity of my book, and a facile unity I have deliberately sacrificed. Yet I think if it has a deeper unity it will be found in exact proportion to its advance towards a unified presentment of Jesus Christ.

CHARLES GARDNER.

52 Davies Street, W.
*May* 8, 1919.

# CONTENTS

## PART I


| CHAPTER | | PAGE |
|---|---|---|
| I. | Introduction | 1 |
| II. | Prophet and Apocalyptist | 14 |
| III. | The Jesus of Criticism | 29 |
| IV. | The Jesus of Criticism—(*continued*) | 57 |


## PART II


| | | |
|---|---|---|
| V. | New Testament Witness to Jesus | 84 |
| VI. | The Gospel of the Kingdom | 98 |
| VII. | Who was Jesus? | 113 |
| VIII. | The Atonement | 125 |
| IX. | The Resurrection and Ascension | 139 |
| X. | The Church | 152 |
| XI. | Eschatology | 165 |
| XII. | Eternal Life | 175 |
| | Index | 187 |

# THE REDEMPTION OF RELIGION

## PART I

### CHAPTER I

#### INTRODUCTION

I

In the year of Our Lord 1139 there was witnessed a meeting and parting of two men of extraordinary significance.

One of them, Abelard, was a man of restless speculative intellect and rich complex nature. Man and all that concerned man was his prime interest. The spirit of life that pulsed in him was impatient of the old forms with which the past had clothed the religious spirit; it thirsted for a new formula which would make man not less but more man, which would take account, without casting a slur, of his bodily activities, which would help him to love God with passion, and use this passion as a purifying fire to purge such earthy elements as kept him from realising his whole nature. Himself thus endowed, it was inevitable that he should have to fight his way through a desert of doubt. His whole life was a round of facing successive doubts, fighting them, and short seasons of uncertain victory; and when the fruit of his difficult life was offered for the benefit of others in his lectures and books, it became evident, to those who had eyes to see, that his system of life and religion was not built on a faith calmly resting on an authority that claimed to be divine, but on doubts which had resolved themselves into passionate affirmations and which set aside without ceremony authority's claim.

The other man, Bernard, dedicated to God before his birth, had a totally different spiritual history. His vision of a perfect

life seen by him while a boy was that of a condition in which all that could be called natural, including the reason, should be 'crucified with Christ,' the human passing into the superhuman, and he could say 'I live, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me.'[1] When Bernard became the Abbot of Clairvaux, it was noised throughout Europe that he had attained his vision. He, too, had known conflict—conflict welcomed and accepted because it had enabled him to put off the old man with the affections and lusts, and put on the new man, which clearly bore a likeness to Christ. He amazed and attracted Europe by despising the things that all men were seeking, and by his joyfulness without them, the source and strength of his supernatural life being hid with Christ in God. When his humility and shrinking from notoriety forced him to refuse the Archbishoprics of Rheims and Genoa, he reached the unsought height where his least word commanded undivided attention.

Bernard could not understand Abelard; while Abelard, conscious of his own brilliant powers, regarded Bernard with a touch of disdain. And these two men were to meet in the Cathedral Church at Sens before a magnificent assembly, and Abelard was to answer for himself for the objectionable passages that the orthodox had found in his books.

One can imagine Abelard setting out with undisturbed confidence in himself, mindful how he had in the past put nominalist and realist to flight; and how, in the great Universities of Europe, no one had been able to stand against his swift and subtle dialectic. To meet and vanquish Bernard would be the crowning glory of his life: and this supreme opportunity had come.

In the cathedral one can see Abelard noting with satisfaction the distinguished persons present, and almost pawing the ground with impatience for Bernard to arrive. At last there was a hush. Bernard had come. There he was in ascetic garb, very thin, with downcast eyes, yet not in the least mock-modest or cringing; rather a humble vessel through whom shone the almighty power and authority of the Spirit. Abelard saw. His courage failed. Refusing to answer he appealed to Rome, and took to flight.

It is usually said that Bernard stood for spirit, faith, loyalty to tradition, and Abelard for reason. But while it is true that Abelard stood for reason taken in its deepest sense, yet it was not at all like what we generally understand by rationalism.

[1] Gal. ii. 20.

If he protested against Bernard's conception of the supernatural it was because Bernard enforced it at the expense of the natural. Abelard was jealous for man, and would not have him dehumanised in the name of God. Man's passions and instincts were not unholy in themselves. Deeds could be pronounced good or ill only with reference to the intention. His instinct for the human discovered everywhere in the Bible a human element. One man might differ enormously from another in culture, and so the Divine speaking through Peter would find utterance in a far different dialect from that used by Paul.

Abelard did not hesitate to declare that Inspiration was to a certain extent conditioned by the human instrument, and this led him to a free handling of the Holy Scriptures, which to us is a commonplace but to his century rank heresy. His favourite word was written by a Father of a much earlier age, and when he used to quote St Augustine's *Habe caritatem et fac quicquid vis*, he felt that that expressed his deepest instinct of life and religion.

We can see now that it was impossible for the twelfth century to reconcile Bernard and Abelard. The man who came nearest to a union of their principles was St Anselm ; but Abelard had listened to him at Laon, and pronounced him unsatisfactory. And since they could not be reconciled it was better that Bernard should prevail. Important as the things were for which Abelard stood, that for which Bernard stood was still more important ; and therefore if, failing to unite in ourselves our faith and our reason, we are compelled to follow one or the other, we shall do best to walk in that way which was marked out by Bernard.

## II

Let us glance next at a still more memorable scene in the year of Our Lord 1521. Here the contending spirits were not represented by two persons ; rather there was, as has sometimes happened in the world's history, one man against the world, the world being represented by the Great Holy Roman Catholic Church, the Mother of Saints (and also of harlots), conscious of having accomplished magnificent things, alone able to command turbulent Europe torn by the contending factions of ambitious kings and lawless barons, imperious, proud, careless, the victor after a thousand contests, and so entirely sure of herself that she could relax herself and her morals, and solace her

superb tedium by dallying with the choice sins once more brought to light by the pagan leaders of the Italian Renaissance.

Luther's instinct was for reality. That is what he demanded of himself, and to what he attained after his own turbulent inner battle. It was this instinct that was so rudely offended when Leo X, anxious to complete the Church of St Peter for which he must have money, sent Tetzel to sell indulgences at Wittenberg. Luther could not but protest, and his opposition to Leo X and his emissary inevitably led to the Diet of Worms, where standing alone he had to face the Catholic Emperor Charles V, Germany's many Princes, and Church dignitaries richly invested, with their retinues recently arrived from Rome. 'Here I stand; I can do no other; so help me God.' Thus he spoke, very simply, modestly, but with calm strength as of one whose feet were firmly planted on rock; and from that moment the protestant spirit gathered momentum for its great task of remaking European religion, reshaping European institutions, and insisting that man's deepest utterance was the voice of God, and that unless his judgment, private or otherwise, was in accordance with this voice he must return to that prison from which he had been so hardly rescued, and become something less than a free man.

We have been able long since to reconcile St Bernard and Abelard. Whether Catholicism and Protestantism can be reconciled in a larger synthesis is a graver question generally answered in the negative. Catholicism stands for an infallible authority resting on an infallible revelation. Protestantism is a vigorous questioning and setting aside that authority. Stated thus, one cannot see any possibility of reconciliation. The two appear to be as eternal as the opposing principles in Zoroastrian dualism. Yet the time may be at hand when they too shall be reconciled. Catholicism is dynamic, and moves even though her movement is as imperceptible as that of the small hand on a watch; and she moves because she carries in her bosom a modicum of the protestant spirit. From time to time one of her children turns and gazes at her terrible face, and dares to move beyond her. She can deal with him by the practised way of excommunication; but if eventually she silently occupies the place of her rebel son, she justifies her claim to be a living body, and this because within the protestant spirit has lifted up its head.

Yet Rome needs more than a protestant in her bosom: she

needs an army in her flanks. Her saints were unable to save her from corruption in the fifteenth century, and without the protestant reformation of Luther, there was nothing else to goad her to her counter-reformation which issued in the canons and decrees of the Council of Trent, and one gasps to think into what a pit of corruption she might have fallen by now. If catholicism is to be our salvation in the future, it will be because she has first been saved by protestantism.

We are far from endorsing Luther's specific doctrines. We will even admit that his favourite doctrine of justification by faith is better enunciated and defined by the Council of Trent. Consubstantiation is by no means a better substitute for Transubstantiation ; and his setting up of an infallible book (always omitting the Epistle of St James) in the place of an infallible Church left a legacy for protestantism which has tied and cramped the human spirit almost as effectually as the papacy could have done. Nor was Luther in any sense of the word a saint. His contemporary in the Roman Church, St Philip Neri manifested incomparably more of the spirit and beauty of holiness. But Philip was also far too delicate an instrument ever to have accomplished what Luther did. To stand against the hydra-headed power of the papacy demanded a great strong massive personality. Luther had the faults of his qualities : he was coarse and vituperative ; but we must accept these or we shall never be fit to live in this world. Have not first-rate artists sometimes betrayed an abnormal sexual instinct that could be satisfied only with garbage ? That too, however we may deplore it, we must accept so long as their vision remains true ; and therefore when this great strong brutal Luther put forth his might and broke for us the power of the papacy and set us free, we must admit that we owe to him a debt that we can never adequately repay.

Protestantism unlocked many powers of the human mind, more in fact than it could reckon with for many a day. First of all to the restlessly inquiring religious mind it gave the Bible. It is not hard to understand the dumb wonder and amazement which possessed men reading the Bible for the first time in their mother-tongue. In it they found all their own deepest experiences. Its words taken into the heart and believed brought peace to their souls, light to their minds, and strength for the daily battle. There could be no doubt that words carrying such power were the words of God, and therefore it was perfectly natural that faith in the wonderful book

as the infallible authority should take the place of the infallible Church. The Bible in England led the Church of England to shake off the papacy and to reform herself on the model of the first four centuries of Christendom. Those of her members who thought that this reform was not radical enough appealed to the Bible only ; while outside of her fold a hundred sects sprang up all worshipping the Bible, and all claiming to read it by the light of the Holy Spirit. On the continent, France had her Calvin, Switzerland her Zwingli, Holland her Erasmus and Grote, while Germany remained true to Luther. Of these Luther was the most important. Lutheranism has remained till to-day when it has lamentably broken down. For while able to deal with individual men, it has not known how to bridge the gulf between the Christian man and the State ; and orthodox Lutherans keeping the two rigidly apart, and seeing no other foundation for the State than force, seem content with their distracting mental division, and unable to see the absurdity of it. We do not blame Luther for this. No country has been able to evolve a Christian State ; at the best, Christian peoples have only been able to say that their State was not entirely bereft of moral elements.

We can understand, as I have said, protestantism's obsession by the Bible. But while admitting that the Bible has been its stay of life, one must point out that the protestant dogma of biblical infallibility has not advanced the cause of human liberty : on the contrary, it has actually hindered the human spirit and has produced the same ugly fruits—fanaticism, bigotry, proselytism—as the dogma of the infallible Church.

But there have been some fine exceptions to this general rule. In England arose the beautiful society of quakers which represents what may be called simple Christianity, and gives one of the two or three permanent answers to the question, What is Christianity ?

George Fox perceived that the final authority cannot be with the Bible any more than with the Church, and that man must dig down to the hidden word in his heart which had given forth the Scriptures, which could give him understanding of the Scriptures, which alone could give him liberty, and which was the ultimate seat of authority.

The great protestant bodies are, in our time, fast comng to this position. It has been forced on them because the dogma of biblical infallibility has vanished before the higher criticism ; and though the transition has not been accom-

plished without much trembling, anxiety, and terror, yet it has brought to light the fact which the quakers grasped from the beginning, that the Christian religion is the revelation of what is written in man's purest spirit, and he can no more get away from it than he can from his own soul.

The history of protestantism has hardly been the history of free thinking for the reason we have just seen. A belief in any infallibility will bring sooner or later an arrest in development. We may be thankful that for many the infallible Church and infallible Book have passed, but there remains another which Christians are naturally loathe to touch—the infallibility of Christ. That too must go. Yet in denying infallibility to Christ there is no implicit denial of His moral perfection or the perfection of His spiritual vision. Moral perfection transcends mechanical infallibility, and spiritual vision that would express itself is necessarily limited by the time-vesture with which it clothes itself. 'He grew in wisdom.' Let us frankly recognise this fact. Our love cannot be shaken, and when our worship is purged of fetichism, we shall see Him as He is, and that vision will ensure the oneness of our freedom, our worship, and our love.

Luther, intent on fighting the papacy, let loose other powers besides that of the religious spirit. The rational spirit had always been repressed by Rome when it showed itself, as in Abelard. Since protestantism also for a long time repressed it, it gathered explosive power, and once exploded threatened for a while to occupy the whole field of man's pursuits. There can be no real objection to reason running its full course. Its part in man's constitution is so important, and its contribution to one or two higher faculties so essential for keeping them sound and wholesome, that it is worth while to detach it from man's complex faculties in order to see clearly what it can accomplish, and, at the same time, what are its limitations.

Rationalism ran vigorously in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, and ran out towards the end of the nineteenth. Its historian Lecky showed us how much we owed to it, and incidentally betrayed a rational mind that could not scratch far below the surface. The rationalistic press has also brought together and published the writings of those who are its best expositors, so that we have had every opportunity of gauging its value and placing it.

It was through rationalism that men in whom it came to

consciousness ran full tilt against many tenets of the Christian faith as held whether by catholic or protestant. The doctrines of the fall of man and his redemption from the fall by the Atoning Sacrifice of Jesus Christ, verbal inspiration, miracles, the Trinity, sacraments, and the idea of the Church, all fled before its ruthless sway ; and while protestants were holding tight their inspired book, others were awaking to find that their faith was eclipsed ; and they cast about for a modern teacher who would hold a torch in their darkness and point out some sort of path along which they might walk, or at least stumble, until they were swallowed up in the eternal night to which all paths must lead.

## III

The early part of the nineteenth century supplies us with one of the greatest and most typical examples of a modern man.

Goethe was the embodiment of all man's suppressed powers come to full expression and use. As the immediate successor of Lessing and Kant, and in line with the rationalists who made part of the court of Frederick the Great, the most brilliant and famous of whom was Voltaire, one might expect him to have been a pure rationalist. In reality he was much more. Deeper than his reason was his thirst for the beautiful ; and this, being stronger than such Christianity as lived on in him, soon ousted it and led him to declare that the place left vacant by Christianity should be filled by art. Yet the eternal human need for religion asserted itself ; and when he cast about for a religious teacher who would allow him to follow his instinct for the beautiful without check, and not compel him to shut the eyes of his reason, he found such a prophet in Spinoza, of whom he continued to speak with the greatest reverence till his dying day in 1832.

Goethe's example has been followed even to the present day by many, who, guided by the same instinct, have given up Christianity. Since these many include some of the best intellects of modern times, one feels a natural curiosity to turn to Spinoza's teaching to see whether it really offered a better solution to modern difficulties than Christian divinity at its best.

Benedict Spinoza was born at Amsterdam in 1632 of Jewish parents in a strange land. His intellect received its first nourishment from Jewish tradition, and so he started with implicit faith in One God, and, like the best thinkers of Judaism,

with an open mind to follow what was being taught by the best Gentile philosophers. Being early possessed by the necessity of reducing to unity the apparent dualism of mind and matter, he verged towards pantheism, which brought him into collision with the Jewish authorities, who, then as always, violently disapproved of pantheism, and manifested their disapprobation by excommunicating him.

Rejected by his own people, Spinoza was led to add the study of Christian theology to his study of Gentile philosophy, and to read the New Testament with as little bias as he read the Old. Being neither orthodox Christian nor orthodox Jew, he occupied the unique position of a man of great intellect able to conduct a difficult inquiry with a mind free of the binding traditions of many centuries of Christian theologians.

This is not the place to examine in detail his philosophy of life and religion. Suffice it to say that starting with the great Cartesian principle, *Cogito ergo sum*, he proceeded to grapple with the nature of the body as well as of the mind, and arrived at the conclusion that man's mind was a *res cogitans*, and his body a *res extensa*, and that the one substance of both must be in God. It is easy to see why reason and art can make their account with such teaching ; but taken as a whole one must point out that Spinozism rooted in monotheism left bigger gaps, and more difficulties unsolved, than had the more highly evolved doctrine of the Christian Trinity. I have traced elsewhere[1] the orderly evolution of thought from Goethe to Strindberg through Schopenhauer and Nietzsche, and here I will only point out that this evolution has gone in a cycle, and that now in the twentieth century the trend is again towards the Christian faith, provided the details of the faith do not contradict but purify and uplift our deepest reason which is instinct, and our creative sense of the beautiful.

## IV

There remains one other great power of the mind of which we must take account.

Science lived a precarious life in the days of catholic supremacy, and it would have fared no better if protestantism had been as highly organised as catholicism. As things happened it was able to hold its way against what was only wholesome opposition, and in the nineteenth century gather such impetus

[1] *Vision and Vesture.*

and prestige that it even threatened to oust religion. We are accustomed now to say that science deals with phenomena, and religion, like philosophy, with the things that lie behind phenomena. No doubt that is a correct view to take so long as we remember that religion concerns the whole man with all his powers, and therefore it must overlap into the domain of science, and not only act on it but be acted on in its turn. History and criticism are the sides of science that have reacted on religion, and any reconstruction of the modes of religion must take full account of these two things.

Let us admit once for all that criticism and a great capacity for learning are pre-eminent endowments of the modern German (not Prussian) mind. France's critics from Renan to Loisy have first learned from Germany ; and if Loisy can contend with Harnack it is because Harnack and his fellows have supplied him with the weapons. England comes in a bad third, and only begins to contend for theological positions that have been stormed and taken long since on the continent.

What is the essence of the modern critical movement ?

Most people would say that its object was purely destructive. But we demur and say that this is true only of certain individuals. The movement was bound to draw into its current minds that were fundamentally sceptical like Renan's and Baur's and Wrede's. But these are aberrations—necessary that scepticism may do its worst—and they serve rather to make clear that the body of critics have cared only to destroy the accretions that clogged reality, and that their positive and constructive purpose has been to find the historical Jesus, and by history was understood that most exacting requirement of the modern mind—a reconstruction of the Past as it was, without an infusion of the modern spirit.

The first great German critics beginning with Reimarus in the early part of the eighteenth century were uncompromising rationalists, and they naturally produced rational lives of Jesus. These were soon succeeded by fictitious and mythical lives. The first, an attempt to guess at the controlling causes in the life of Jesus which were not apparent in the Gospels, and the second, represented by Strauss, a more strict adherence to the historical spirit, which was quick to search out anything approaching myth.

Strauss, by recapitulating and analysing the work of his predecessors, made it easy for others to place them in their proper perspective, but his own work was weakened by his

frequent change of position, though he remained steadfast to his original contention that there were large mythical elements in the New Testament, and by mythical he understood a poetical wrapping of things eternally true.

Strauss looms much larger for us than his predecessors. Our free-thinkers of the early Victorian period began their free-thinking with his aid. George Eliot translated the fourth edition of his *Leben Jesu* into good scholarly English. When Oxford undergraduates were being stirred by Newman's sermons, those who would not yield to his subtle influence read Strauss, and through him gained a knowledge of the things with which Germany had long been grappling, and which had scarcely so much as entered into the mind of Newman.

From Strauss to Keim comes a dreary time. Liberal theologians wrote liberal lives of Jesus with an intense infusion of the modern German mind, with the result that their Jesus lost all charm, and assumed the features of a heavy German masquerading as the troubadour of an earlier age. Still we must admit that this period though dull did important work. Every position stormed by the critics called forth German champions of orthodoxy, who, like Tholuck and Neander, were as learned as the critics, and if after their massive assault the position still held one might rest assured that it was impregnable.

Keim's *Jesus of Nazara* (1867–1872), very long and very learned, has still its interest. He lacked the fire of genius that could have fused his learning and knowledge into a luminous whole. His Life serves as a useful reference book, and it has the positive value of making clear the difference between the Lord's immanent view of the kingdom which is expressed in the famous text, The Kingdom of God is within you, and the imminent view which marked the last discourses so emphatically.

With Bousset (1904) there is a great change in the presentment of Jesus. After a hundred years of vigorous pruning by the critics, Bousset tries to seize the emerging Jesus, who is as bare and lifeless as Aaron's rod. His book, free of all the encumbering matter which Germans, like Keim, love to pile up, is likewise bare and curt ; and one feels that one must wait to see whether the rod will blossom in the creative hands of a genius rather than a critic, and whether Jesus, clothed again in beautiful garments woven by the spirit of life, will stand forth in native majesty and draw the new world to His feet.

And last of all there is Schweitzer, the analyst of the movement which has run its course. The sceptical tendency which showed itself in the Tubingen school has culminated in the thorough-going scepticism of Wrede ; and the essentially constructive genius of the movement taken as a whole has succeeded in Schweitzer in discovering the points of contact of Jesus with history, and showing the nature of the eschatological vesture with which He clothed His vision of divine things.

To-day as we look towards the Past we see that every theory has been tried to the uttermost, that each quality of the human mind taken alone breaks down, that all together are mutually corrective.

Religion alone, induces discipline and zeal with bigotry, persecution, and ultimate loss of morality. Reason alone, has swept away a hundred forms of superstition and dreadful beliefs which hung over man like a nightmare, and made him a cringing creature towards God, but it has no breath of inspiration. Art for art's sake runs swiftly into a pit of corruption and needs religion to pull it out. Science has at last discovered the outline that bounds its own ignorance, and is learning to listen to other voices besides its own. History under the searching rays of criticism has given back to us Jesus of Nazareth greater, more human, and more divine than His biographers had imagined. Philosophy is cutting itself away from the platonic notion of ideas which it finds too mechanical, and by seeing in evolution the result of a mysterious creative life-force is precipitating itself into the arms of religion.

These many powers, then, are converging to unity, and men on their watch-towers are glimpsing a new world with which their manifold faculties can make their account. The age of agnosticism, which worked itself out in the nineteenth century, was the inevitable mark of a world passing away. Those who stood in the advance guard of thought, unable to synthesise their philosophy and Christianity, let go Christianity and were the martyrs who prepared the way for the new age. They parted from Christianity in no frivolous spirit, for they had loved it, and they knew that it was the ladder by which they had climbed ; but they knew also that they could not close their eyes to a thousand things that contradicted Christianity as it had been taught. So they waited in pained suspense, without sight of the city where they would be, yet hoping that the day would come when there should be a system

of life and religion which should conserve what 'they had loved long since and lost awhile' in such a large formula that they could accept it without doing violence to any faculty of their manifold nature.

For when that day should come it would bring a joyous return to faith.

## CHAPTER II

### PROPHET AND APOCALYPTIST

### I

Jesus Christ spoke of the Law and the Prophets as abiding forces, and Himself as their fulfiller. We will only add that He transformed before He fulfilled.

The Law need not detain us here. Every Sunday-school scholar knows that there was an abiding element in the law which made St Paul declare, 'The law is spiritual'; [1] but it is much harder to decide just what that permanent element is, though we suspect that Jesus spoke the last word when He said, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy mind, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and thy neighbour as thyself.

The prophet's office, however, we must pause to explain, since it is not understood by the bulk of Christians.

A prophet is one who expounds the will of God to his generation. He is God's spokesman, as Aaron was called Moses' prophet when he was appointed his spokesman. The prophet announced his great utterances with the formula, Thus saith the Lord, and this formula drives us at once to ask, Whence came his message? and until we can answer our question we shall not know what is meant by revelation and inspiration.

Orthodox Judaism down to Maimonides believed that the actual words were given to the prophet by God, and Maimonides in his *Guide to the Perplexed* even explained how God manipulated the air to convey the words to Moses' ear. Christianity took over the notion of verbal inspiration. The doctrine has come into great disrepute to-day because of the indiscriminating way it was applied to the whole Bible. Yet an inspiration that does not involve the words is meaningless, and if a

[1] Rom. vii. 14.

prophet never spoke the word of God, but only his own word, then our interest in him ceases to be theological, and becomes merely archaeological.

Jeremiah gave an unconsciously beautiful account of inspiration when he wrote, I said, I will not make mention of Him nor speak any more in His name. But His word was in mine heart as a burning fire shut up in my bones, and I was weary with forebearing, and I could not stay.[1] Here we see a prophet of the first order compelled to utter words which brought to him reproach and derision, and at once we perceive that he is only the instrument of a mighty power which stirred him from time to time, which lifted him out of himself, and gave him the burning consciousness that when he spoke truly it was because the words were given to him.

The prophets did not always keep their high level. Balaam is an example of one who would sometimes deliberately speak at the dictation of his own spirit; and with every prophet there was the temptation to refuse to utter the word that would make him unpopular, and to speak smooth words that would make him welcome wherever he went. But apart from the human weakness of the prophet, even when he was utterly sincere, he could not always distinguish, amid the blurred and confused sounds, between the voice of his own spirit and the voice of God's Spirit. For this reason Israel was to try the prophets as Christians are to try the spirits, and the utterances of the loftiest prophet—even of Jesus Himself be it said with all reverence—are to be retained as the word of God only when they withstand the searching test of history and many centuries of human experience.

A secondary outcome of the prophet's inspiration, though it was not an essential part of his office, was a forecasting of the future. Here he worked under great limitations. The future holds the secret of its own forms, and when the prophet tries to clothe his vision of the future he is compelled to take his forms from the past, and therefore in all prophecy there is an element of illusion that can only be separated from it when the future passes into the historical present. Whence it happens that the present is the literal fulfilment of the prophet's forecast only when his utterance is deep enough to be true for other generations besides his own.

A true prophet entered into his inheritance from the past with the steadfast purpose of re-creating it by his own spirit.

[1] Jer. xx. 9.

The good and evil, light and darkness, were so inextricably commingled, both without and within himself, that he could only hope that after a life of faithful conflict with himself, he would lessen the darkness and increase the light, and so hand on a better inheritance to his successor. This sifting process was helped by outward facts, for the prophet always kept himself in vital touch with his age ; but we must note that it is never completed, and therefore in every age there is need for a prophet.

If we look to the secret causes at work which urged a prophet to turn from his proper work of speaking to his generation to forecast the future, we shall find that these were pain and misery in captivity. How can we sing the Lord's song in a strange land ? the prophet cried, and therefore, By the waters of Babylon we sat down and wept. Dull pain and misery weighed down their soul even to death, while they restlessly questioned the ways of God's providence, and clutched hold of the thought that their agony in exile was God's judgment for their iniquities, and that if they repented perhaps God would again be merciful and gracious, and restore them to their beloved land.

The prophet in exile, more sensitive even than the people, passed through a deeper agony, in which he learned strange lessons of vicarious suffering, and out of his pain accepted and offered was born an immortal hope which nourished itself on a thousand intangible impressions. The prophets of Israel were men of creative imagination, and when their imaginations were fed by suffering, and irrepressible hope seeking to justify itself, they fashioned a glorious future in which God should reign—a Messianic Kingdom should be set up in Jerusalem ruled by wise shepherds or a faithful son of David, into which Israel should enter by repentance, and live free and happy days with the law of God written in his heart ; and through the abundant prosperity of Israel all nations of the earth should be uplifted and blessed.

The prophet pictured the Messianic Kingdom from his memory of Jerusalem under the reign of David. Once conceived the picture grew, being taken up by each prophet in turn, who added his touches in his effort to complete the picture, though in the case of some minor prophets the picture received only retrogressive daubs. The idea of the Messiah grew much more slowly, and His image becomes distinct only in the apocalyptic writers who succeeded the prophets.

The prophet was marked by his passionate love of righteousness. He was convinced that God had driven His people into captivity because of their iniquities ; and if Israel was to return he must first through repentance gain a new heart and a new spirit. The conversion of the people was to be followed by judgment ; and so the Day of the Lord which should usher in the Messianic Kingdom was not without its terrors to those who were unholy in heart and life. The growth of these ideas can be traced from Jeremiah and Isaiah to Malachi.

Jeremiah (626–586 B.C.) foretold the Messianic Kingdom on the return of the people to Jerusalem after seventy years[1] captivity. With him there is no individual Messiah, but the whole people are to be the BRANCH of Righteousness ascribing its righteousness to the Lord (Jehovah-tsidkenu). Rachel, who had refused to be comforted for the captivity of her children, dries her tears as they come again from the land of the enemy.[2] The return brings a new covenant better than the old, for the law of God is to be law of their inner spirit, and their spontaneous obedience to the law will give liberty, joy, and complete satisfaction to soul and body. The Kingdom is not to be proudly exclusive. Jeremiah seized the implications of his burning faith in one God of all the earth, and could announce with certainty : 'If the nations will diligently learn the ways of my people, and swear by my name, The Lord liveth . . . then shall they be built in the midst of my people. But if they will not obey, I will utterly pluck up and destroy that nation, saith the Lord.'

In deutero-Isaiah (545-539 B.C.) the return to Jerusalem and the establishment of the Messianic Kingdom is described in terms of loftiest poetry which has burnt itself into the heart of Christendom. 'Comfort ye, comfort ye, my people, said your God,' for the glory of the Lord shall be revealed, the way of the Lord shall be prepared. Already a voice in the wilderness announces the advent of God.[3]

The years pass. The future of Jeremiah and Isaiah has passed into the present, and their lofty prophecies are being corrected by the inexorable events of history. The return is an accomplished fact for the last sixteen years ; but where is the promise of the Kingdom ? Is there a prophet in Israel who can explain the delay ? Haggai (520 B.C.) reassures the disappointed people. The Kingdom will certainly come, but the temple must first be re-built. He points to Zerubbabel,

[1] Jer. xxiii. 6. [2] Jer. xxxi. 15. [3] Isa. xl. 1–3.

son of Shealtiel, the governor of Judah, and Josedech the high priest, who came and did work in the house of the Lord of Hosts, their God.[1] Zerubbabel's faithful service leads to higher honour. 'I will make thee as a signet; for I have chosen thee, saith the Lord of Hosts.'[2] Is Zerubbabel, then the promised Messiah?

Zechariah, remembering Jeremiah's prophecy of the BRANCH, and finding it inapplicable to the people as Jeremiah intended, applies it to the Messiah, whose office is lofty. 'He shall build the temple of the Lord; and he shall bear the glory, and shall sit and rule upon his throne; and the counsel of peace shall be between them both.'[3]

In these two prophets the Day of the Lord is to bring destruction to most of the nations, and in Zechariah those Gentiles only who are obedient will take their part in the kingdom.

Joel (400 B.C.) announces terrible judgments of God in connection with the Day of the Lord which shall annihilate the Gentiles. Hence the Day of the Lord becomes a *dies irae*. It is immediately preceded by an outpouring of the Spirit, and portents in the sun and moon and on the earth.[4]

Malachi (458 B.C.) is the last prophet in the Old Testament we need notice. He is sure that the Lord will come to His temple, and suddenly; but His way must first be made ready by His messenger, who is named Elijah.[5] The Day will burn as an oven, and the Lord Himself will be like a refiner's fire. When the fiery judgment is accomplished, then the Sun of Righteousness will arise on all who fear His name, and bring healing in His wings.[6]

We see how all these prophecies of the future with their message of hope were doomed to cause disappointment. So long as the prophet instructed his own generation he accomplished a magnificent work. But we must guard against supposing that his prophecies of the future failed. We have seen how they sprang from a quenchless hope in the midst of present misery. They were sure that their hope came from God, and that if the form into which they cast their imaginings of the future perished, yet the imaginings contained something that also came from God. Misery, hope, history, experience, were all at work together on some great ideas to which the prophets' minds had given birth. The details were often vague and con-

[1] Hag. i. 14. [2] Hag. ii. 23. [3] Zech. vi. 12–13.
[4] Joel ii. 28–31. [5] Mal. iv. 5. [6] Mal. iv. 2.

fused ; but there was always the possibility that a great religious Spirit would come who should with inspired imagination seize the essential truth of their prophecies, and by remoulding them give them both a particular and universal significance.

And that is one way of God's revelation. It seems to fall short of that dream of an infallible revelation to which the Church of Rome so persistently clings, yet it is our safeguard against certain evils which she has not known how to ward off. If by revelation we mean an imparting to the mind of the prophet a knowledge of divine truths which he, as man, has no intrinsic means of reaching, and which, therefore, we can bring to no common test, then there must be an authority to guard zealously the divine deposit, and just in proportion to its importance it must be cruelly relentless and severe to heretics ; but if the prophet ultimately reached the enunciation of truths which are written in every man's deepest nature, then we can—rather we must—bring all teachings of Authority to the test of human experience and history, and thus guard against the immoral spirit which flared up so terribly in the Spanish Inquisition, and which is really inseparable from the dogma of infallibility.

The apparent failure of prophecy brought men to a new despair out of which sprang a new mode of revelation. The prophetic writers were succeeded by the apocalyptic, whom we must now examine to see how far they have helped man to an understanding of the mind of God.

## II

Apocalyptic literature arose from the failure of prophecy and despair of the world. Its germ is in Ezekiel, Zechariah, and Joel ; but whereas the prophet made the historical present with its indubitable facts his starting-point, the apocalyptist tried to shut his eyes to the present and escape into a visionary prospect of the future. The prophet used the present to correct the heritage handed down to him from the past : the apocalyptic writer by refusing the present lost his hold of the one thing that could check his wildest visionary flights and keep him in touch with reality. He would not accept the fact made plain by the present, that prophecies of the past were not fulfilled. He explained the apparent failure as the fault not of prophecy but of interpretation. His mind became hazy concerning what was true and what was not true, which ended in

the unconscious loss of the love of truth for truth's sake—a terrible loss, characteristic of many religious minds in all ages.

We have seen that the prophet's first business was to declare the will of God to his generation, and that to forecast the future was only a secondary product of his office. The apocalyptist made his vision of the future his sole concern, and he used history, if he used it at all, as a framework for his visions. The farther back he went for his history the better for his purpose, for he could take the names of outstanding persons, while the blurred details in the history of past generations enabled him to supply richer details out of his own subjective imagination.

The Book of Enoch is the best example of the apocalyptic method. The author, writing at about the beginning of the Christian era, chooses for his hero an antediluvian patriarch. Thus his imagination could work without being weighed down by the need of historical accuracy. Once the writer had placed his hero Enoch, he no longer troubled himself with the machinery, but proceeded at once to his visions. The visions gain enormously in verisimilitude, since most that Enoch foretells is written out of the author's knowledge of what has happened, and its fulfilment gives to the reader confidence in those remaining predictions of the author which, being yet in the future, he cannot bring to the test of history.

Such a method has its inherent weakness. It introduces a bad method in exegesis, and the author, by detaching himself from place and time, becomes other-worldly in religion and vaguely loose in prediction. Whereas the best prophets took a burning interest in affairs, and so preserved a living interest in this world, the apocalyptist held himself aloof, and the only value the world had for him was his expectation of its re-creation by the almighty power of God.

Just here was unexpected strength. The apocalyptist got his eye off the creature and on to the Creator. His sole hope for the future was in God. He thought of God as an almighty sovereign carrying out His eternal purposes among the nations of the world, choosing, electing, rejecting, and hardening whom He would and when He would, grandly independent of His creatures, and handling the peoples and nations as so many pawns on the board of the universe. By his worship of such a sovereign God, the Apocalyptist, like the modern Calvinist, became grim, strong, tenacious, dogged, severe, and inhuman; and he could contemplate whole nations being turned into hell on the Day of Judgment without so much as a wince. But he

got away from practical morality. The prophets hungered and thirsted after righteousness, and though they were predestinarian they managed to find within the circle of predestination a large place for human effort and human repentance. The apocalyptist with his eye wholly on the Almighty God conceived of Him as doing just what He liked without so much as the repentance of the people compelling Him to a decisive act.

Each nation has its own mode of expression suitable to its own genius. Israel's was the genius of sorrow, despair, and a brooding sense of sin. Greece had a sunny genius which humanity brings forth only at exceptional times. Sorrow and despair have hitherto held such a large and persistent part in human experience that the Jew's contribution to the literature of sorrow has kept a paramount place.

It is important to notice that the Jew's sorrow was national in its root. The individual suffered because he was an organic part of a suffering nation. Hence his vision of the future of his nation clothed itself in the monstrous shapes of beasts and dragons, angel-princes of the nations, and false prophets leading the nations astray, of the Prince-Messiah in His long conflict with anti-christ, and His final gathering in of His elect, and judgment of impenitent nations.

The apocalyptic visionary took over much of his imagery from the prophets. The details of his vision went back to the earliest golden age as pictured by dreamy prophets. The tree of life and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil came from the garden of Eden ; from Jerusalem arose the heavenly Jerusalem ; from the indispensable river, the river of life ; from the preciousness of trees in a desert land, the tree with twelve manner of fruits and leaves for the healing of the nations. These are palpably the working symbols of the visionary apocalyptist, but they were used to indicate coming events that were to be in no wise symbolical. The Day of the Lord, the Messianic Kingdom, the Messiah, the Day of Judgment—these were not symbols, but the realities which would be manifested in due time on the earth.

The two most important apocalyptic books, since they influenced Jesus, are Daniel and Enoch.

In *Daniel* the idea of the Kingdom becomes explicit.

'In the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom which shall never be destroyed . . . and it shall stand for ever.'[1]

[1] Dan. ii. 44.

'His kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and his dominion is from generation to generation.'[1]

Also the rôle of the Messiah becomes clearer.

'Behold, one like the Son of man came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of Days, and they brought him near before him. And there was given unto him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages should serve him: his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed.'[2]

This Kingdom is given to the saints.

'The saints of the most High shall take the kingdom, and possess the kingdom for ever, even for ever and ever.'[3]

Thus Messiah's Kingdom is a supernatural kingdom to be set up on earth; and Messiah, who is called the Son of Man, is a supernatural being who shall fittingly receive the service of all people and nations and languages.

This Kingdom is at hand.

'Seventy weeks [i.e. 490 years][4] are determined upon thy people and upon thy holy city, to finish the transgression, and to make an end of sins, and to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in everlasting righteousness: . . . know therefore and understand, that from the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem unto the Messiah the Prince shall be seven weeks, and threescore and two weeks [i.e. 483 years]: the street shall be built again, and the wall even in troublous times. And after threescore and two weeks shall Messiah be cut off, but not for himself: and the people of the prince that shall come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary; and the end thereof shall be with a flood, and unto the end of the war desolations are determined. And he shall confirm the covenant with many for one week [i.e. seven years]: and in the midst of the week he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease, and for the overspreading of abominations he shall make it desolate, even until the consummation, and that determined shall be poured upon the desolate.' This will be 'a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation even to that same time,'[5] but the trouble is followed by deliverance 'for every one that shall be found written in the book,' and these elect taking their joyful part in Messiah's Kingdom shall be joined by the

[1] Dan. iv. 3. [2] Dan. vii. 13. [3] Dan, vii. 18.
[4] Dan. ix. 24–27. [5] Dan. xii. 1.

elect dead, 'many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake'[1] and together shall enter into eternal life.

The Ethiopic Book of Enoch (170-64 B.C.), though it has not the rich oriental colour of the Book of Daniel, is in some respects more interesting. It does not enrich much the idea of the Kingdom, but its picture of the Messiah stands out in bold relief; and again and again we can see the origin of phrases and ideas that occur frequently in the Synoptic Gospels.

The Messiah is called the Elect One,[2] the Anointed, the Righteous One, and generally the Son of Man; after the kingdom is established then his congregation (i.e. his Church) shall be manifested.

The writer has the happy curiosity to ask his august guide who the Son of Man is and whence he was. He is told that[3] 'this is the Son of Man to whom righteousness belongs; with whom righteousness has dwelt; and who will reveal all the treasures of that which is concealed. . . . This Son of Man shall raise up kings and the mighty from their couches, and the powerful from their thrones; shall loosen the bridles of the powerful, and break in pieces the teeth of sinners.'

The Son of Man existed before the creation. 'Before the sun and the signs were created, before the stars of heaven were formed, his name was invoked in the presence of the Lord of spirits . . . and he shall be the light of nations.'[4]

He shall receive worship.

'He shall be the hope of those whose hearts are troubled. All, who dwell on earth, shall fall down and worship before him; shall bless and glorify him. Therefore the Elect and the Concealed one existed in His presence, before the world was created, and for ever.'[5]

He wills the life of his own.

'For in his name shall they be preserved; and his will shall be their life.'[6]

He will sit upon his throne.

'And in those days shall the Elect One sit upon his throne while every secret of intellectual wisdom shall proceed from his mouth; for the Lord of Spirits has gifted and glorified him.'[7]

In Chapter LXI the statements become still more explicit.

'The word of his mouth shall destroy all the sinners and all the ungodly, who shall perish at his presence.'[8]

[1] Dan. xii. 2. [2] Enoch xxxviii. 1. [3] Enoch xlvi. 2, 3.
[4] Enoch xlviii. 3. [5] Enoch xlviii. 4. [6] Enoch xlviii. 7.
[7] Enoch l. 3. [8] Enoch lvi. 4.

He has existed from eternity ; and when he sits on the throne of his glory

'Then shall the kings, the princes, and all who possess the earth, glorify him who has dominion over all things, him who was concealed ; for from eternity the Son of Man was concealed, whom the Most High preserved in the presence of his power and revealed to the elect.' [1]

He exercises the prerogatives of the Ancient of Days.

'They shall fix their hopes on this Son of Man, shall pray to him, and petition him for mercy.' [2]

On his throne of glory judgment shall be assigned to him.

'He sat upon the throne of glory ; and the principal part of judgment was assigned to him, the Son of Man. Sinners shall despair and perish from the face of the earth, while those who seduced them shall be bound with chains for ever.' [3]

To eat with him in his Kingdom will be the privilege of the saints and elect.

'And with this Son of Man shall they dwell, eat, lie down and rise up for ever and ever.' [4]

There is a passage about the blood of the righteous which throws light on the modes in which Atonement was conceived at the time of Jesus.

'In that day shall the holy ones assemble, who dwell above the heavens, and with united voice petition, supplicate, praise, laud, and bless the name of the Lord of spirits, on account of the blood of the righteous which has been shed ; that the prayer of the righteous may not be intermitted before the Lord of spirits ; that for them He would execute judgment ; and that His patience may not endure for ever.' [5]

The blood of the righteous, then, united with the prayers of the saints had power to force the Hand of the Almighty to bring the Day of the Lord, which would not only lead them to the joy of heaven, but to the joy of beholding vengeance on those who had ill-treated them.

We thus get in the books of Daniel and Enoch almost every phrase and every prerogative of Christ as portrayed in the Synoptic Gospels. When I come to the story of Jesus and adhere faithfully to His phrases, it will be seen at once that for the most part they are derived from Daniel and Enoch, and completed from the prophets. I will only add here that Enoch, like the prophets, knew nothing of a suffering and dying

[1] Enoch lxi. 10. [2] Enoch lxi. 13. [3] Enoch lxviii. 39.
[4] Enoch lxi. 17. [5] Enoch xlvii. 1–2.

Messiah. Messiah was to come in the clouds of heaven with great and terrible glory, and the suffering was to be not his, but those sinners whom he should cast into everlasting fire. The prophet of the Exile who wrote of suffering, rejection, and death wrote of faithful Israel, whose vicarious suffering he divined through his own deep experience in exile. And therefore when Jesus entered on His Messianic calling at His Baptism there was no prospect of shame and death to cloud His sunny soul; it was only afterwards as He unravelled His destiny amidst days of dire conflict that He came to think of Himself as the suffering Servant of the Lord, and to see that by the pathway of suffering and death alone should He be able to fulfil what lay at the heart of the old prophecies of the glorious Son of Man coming in the clouds of heaven.

## III

In A.D. 26 the old hopes revived again, and a prophet appeared in the wilderness proclaiming that they were about to be fulfilled.

John the Baptist was one of those figures who always excite curiosity. He eschewed those things which most people think are indispensable for happiness. He wore camel's hair and a leathern girdle instead of soft clothing; he ate locust-beans and wild honey instead of rich foods; he slept in a cave instead of a comfortable bed; and a stern self-control was proof against all the alluring charm of woman. The strength of the things he overcame passed into his spirit and fed it till he became a strong massive personality with a ringing voice that compelled attention. With such power he might have summoned and led an army, but resisting the egoistic will to power he regarded himself as the humble instrument of truth, and he cared little what happened to himself so long as the truth prevailed. The past may hand to us a mixed inheritance of truth and error, but its truth sometimes descends like an avalanche, when it either crushes or compels submission. John submitted, and by so doing not only gained the last victory over himself, but swept on in his short course like an avalanche himself, accomplishing his work in a few intense months.

His message was the simplest. The Kingdom of Heaven is at hand. Repent, and be baptised, and receive in the outward sign of water the sacramental assurance of the right of entry into the Kingdom.

Quickly popular expectation was aroused. Amidst the confused utterances of the prophets one or two things stood out clearly. Messiah's Kingdom was to be preceded by a Day of wrath, and the Day of wrath or judgment, according to Joel, by a great outpouring of the Spirit, and according to Malachi by the appearance of Elijah to prepare the way for the terrible advent of the Lord. John proclaimed that one mightier than he should come and effect the outpouring of the Spirit. His words deeply stirred the people, and they watched daily for the coming of Elijah. Those who repented and were baptised received the outward pledge that they should be baptised with the Holy Spirit, the rest would remain till the imminent Day of wrath, when the Lord should be revealed in judgment, and with His fan in His hand should thoroughly purge His floor, and burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire.

Who was John ?

Jesus reading all events in the light of His Messianic consciousness, declared that John was Elijah ; and His disciples, working from their own personal knowledge of His Christship, which had started them on a new and upward path of holiness, accepted the testimony of Jesus, and saw in John the fulfilment of prophecies uttered by Isaiah, Joel, and Malachi. Whether John applied the name of Elijah to himself we cannot say ; but he was in no uncertainty about his mission. He was sent to the nation to proclaim a national repentance to prepare the way for the nation's true King to come and set up His Kingdom. He had pored over the writings both of the apocalyptists and prophets ; but his robust mind, rejecting what was unreal in the apocalyptic vision, returned to the prophecies of the more virile prophets ; and, like them, he believed that the one condition necessary for bringing the Kingdom was national repentance. John's preference for the prophets made him a prophet. This the people had never doubted, and some of them taught by Jesus saw him as Elijah. Jesus Himself testified that he was a prophet, and awarded him the highest human honour when He intimated that he was even 'more than a prophet.'

John's preaching aroused the ecclesiastical party as well as the people. The Pharisees and Sadducees came with the rabble of tax-gatherers, harlots, and soldiers, asking what they should do.

John, steeped in the Prophet Isaiah, and inheriting his love of righteousness, was insistent that baptism must be followed

by fruits of righteousness, and he made plain what was the kind of social righteousness expected from each class of persons in a way that should satisfy the most exacting demands of the modern socialist.

Among those who came to John to be baptised was an unknown man named Jesus. He was young, with a mighty ferment at work within. So far He had not found His vocation, but His sensitive and impressionable nature made Him quick and generous to gauge the value of others, and He recognised in John a man of like fibre with the old prophets who had fed His own soul. There, deep within, were stirring passionate hopes of the near approach of the Kingdom. He yearned to do all that would bring the Kingdom, and since John proclaimed the baptism of repentance as the surest way of hastening it, Jesus asked for baptism at his hands, and was then and there baptised by him in the River Jordan. As He emerged from the waters of death into newness of life, there came to Him a marvellous vision. The Heavens above opened, the Spirit of God like a dove descended upon Him ; and when His whole being was flooded with the Spirit His consciousness cleared, and He knew Himself to be the Christ, the Son of God, in whom God was well pleased.

From that day Jesus came into prominent notice, but John's work was almost over. Cast into the prison fortress of Machaerus for reproving Herod the tetrarch, he there spent the remaining days of his life, turning over in his mind the inscrutable ways of Providence. News of the outside world was brought to him from time to time by his disciples, and he heard of the wonderful words and works of the Jesus whom he had baptised. Yet his strong soul could not always escape the torment of doubt. Was this Jesus really the Messiah ? He would send his disciples to inquire. ' Art thou He that should come, or do we look for another ? ' He received answer in the words of his favourite prophet Isaiah how the blind received their sight and the lame walked, the lepers were cleansed and the deaf heard, and how the poor were having the same Gospel preached to them that he had preached. From these significant facts he was left to draw his own conclusions ; but he had not long to wait before his spirit was released from the bewildering problems of this world.

John was a prophet combining the prophetic and apocalyptic heritage of Israel. He clothed his vision of coming events in the old imagery. We know now that coming events create

their own form, but until this truth was grasped there was often bitter and tragic disappointment for the prophet, since his vision of truth had its necessary element of illusion.

A greater than he would struggle in darkness with the same necessary element, until the darkness should resolve itself into light, and teach us that illusion is a mode of truth, and that it has been one of God's great means of revealing His mind to His creatures throughout the ages.

John believed that the Day of Wrath, the *Dies Irae* was at hand, and that already the axe was laid to the root of the trees. History did not fulfil his expectations in the way that he imagined. There came to him the meek figure of Jesus asking for baptism ; and, taught by the Spirit, he experienced the supreme ecstasy of recognising who He was ; for the rest he spent his few remaining months in the maddening gloom of a state prison. His vision yet had its deep core of truth, though it has taken many centuries to get it into perspective ; but once placed, we can find no more appropriate language than that which all the Evangelists instinctively seized, when, ignoring the fact that Isaiah's prophecy had failed in the letter long ago, they declared of John that his was the voice crying in the wilderness to prepare the way of the Lord.

# CHAPTER III

## THE JESUS OF CRITICISM

### I

The Baptism of Jesus was followed immediately by a period of temptation.

The Baptism with its accompanying vision of the opened heavens brought to Him the full consciousness that He was the unique Son of God, and with that conviction, what is of deep importance in every religious life, the sense of vocation, which He expressed very simply in the words, I am sent. Throughout His ministry, even in the darkest days, He held fast to this golden thread which assured Him that since it was God who called His instrument, He had power to carry His servant through to His desired end.

But though the Baptism revealed to Him His Messianic calling, it left many things in darkness. The vision of such a high destiny was bewildering. How was He to shape His life? What method should He follow? The past presented many types of prophets and priests and kings, but gave no precedent for the Messiah except in the inspired rhapsodies of the prophets. These He knew by heart; but while they inspired they did not enlighten. There was a vast maze of prophetic and apocalyptic literature into which any one entering rashly would certainly be lost. It had its high value, which it yielded only to the Master-mind who knew how to re-create and shape it to new ends, and thus it was not a signal but a challenge to Jesus, compelling Him to seek for light in the depths of His own spirit.

Besides the darkness yet to be pierced by light there was reactionary depression into which the exaltation induced by His Baptism of the Spirit immediately plunged Him; and the darkness and depression drove Him into a wilderness of sharp conflict.

John the Baptist, who was the greatest spirit Jesus had known, and who influenced Him, perhaps, more than the old prophets, had prepared himself to fulfil his calling by severe self-discipline and fasting. Jesus tried the same method with great rigour, acquiring thereby the doubtful privilege of seeing dark visions of Satan. Urged by hunger, and holding fast His new consciousness that as Messiah He was the Son of God, He was tormented by the thought that He ought to prove His Messiahship by means of miracles.

This temptation took different forms. As the Son of God He should be able to turn stones into bread. What was man's life? In what did it consist? Man's life depended surely on daily bread. Yet within Him the imperious voice of the Spirit insisted that the true man lived by the word of God, for which Jesus searched in the Old Testament Scriptures. He searched freely and found exactly what He wanted: Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God.[1] This word cleared further His vision for the future. His real, divine, eternal self lived by the word of God, and He should fulfil His nature, not by disrespecting and putting aside the laws of time, which are God's, but by manifesting the Divine in the Human, Eternity in Time.

The same temptation suddenly reappeared in a new form. He would prove His divinity by doing something marvellous in the presence of the world. There are strange powers locked in man's spirit, and just when it is tumbled out into consciousness there frequently comes at the same time a sense of miraculous power which can act on material things magically, and overcome the laws to which the human body appears to be subject. The Psalmist testified that one who lived in the secret place of the Most High could live a charmed life, his feet should be kept by the angels from being dashed against a stone, he should tread on lions and adders, young lions and dragons, and publish the fact that he lived in God by a supernatural life. All this was present in the mind of Jesus. Let Him throw Himself from the pinnacle of the temple. The world would see and believe. Yet another true word assured Him that that would be tempting God. Henceforth, then, He would manifest His supernatural life by living a supremely natural life.

Once more the same temptation shifted. A great personality suddenly coming to full self-consciousness feels not only the

[1] Deut. viii. 3.

will to power, but that he has only to give the word of command, and all men will blindly flock to him. He holds the power that has enabled the kingdoms of the world to rule. Let Jesus respect and reverence the powers by which those who have desired to conquer the world have nearly succeeded. He, surely, would quite succeed. But the still, small voice of God's word persisted in being heard. He must acknowledge and obey God, for God's Kingdom remains because it is founded in love, gentleness, and meekness. He would show that these despised graces carry a greater and more lasting potency than the violent forces of the kingdoms of this world which one by one pass away.

Jesus was exhausted after His long conflict, but He experienced that spiritual renewal which refreshed His bodily life, and which becomes continuous with those who live in the Spirit. As he emerged out of His wilderness of storm and stress, many things which His Baptism had left in darkness became clear. He was not to follow John's method. He should eat His meat and drink His wine, and live a purely human life among His fellows. He was to aim not at the abnormal but the normal, not at the exception but the rule. He should reveal to men the long lost vision of the human measure, and show that the Divine is most clearly reflected in the human, and that He could live best this perfectly human life not by burdening Himself with many rules for holy living, but by following His own deepest instinct, and allowing the Law of God written in His heart free play in His life. In this way His life should be the rule for all living and growing things ; and He was to prove that if the lilies of the field were arrayed in a beauty far exceeding the glory of Solomon, His was a life altogether lovely and of piercing fragrance. A life that is imitative and feeds wholly on the past can scarcely be quite beautiful ; at best it is a photographic reproduction of what was beautiful. Jesus when He determined to obey the law of the spirit of life working in His own spirit found that this difficult obedience involved the creation of His character, the control of the circumstances of His life, and also, to a certain extent, the re-creation of the modes of the religious life handed to Him from the past, and needing to be moulded afresh to become vehicles of His highest vision. In the short but intensely full months of His public ministry the life within made Him into something different from what the world had ever seen before, for He became actually a new creation of the life eternal. For this reason

those who saw and judged Him from the old point of view saw no beauty in Him that they should desire Him; it was only those who received Him and learned to love Him who awoke one day to find that this Living One who was obedient to life even unto death was altogether lovely because He was altogether alive.

## II

Soon after the temptation, Jesus started His ministry in Jerusalem. He offered Himself, and He was rejected. This is not mentioned by the Synoptists, but it is implied by St John. The fruit of His ministry was a teacher of Israel who came to Him by night, and a handful of friends whom He afterwards called to be apostles. His disappointment and sorrow were soon to be deepened by the news that John was cast into prison. This, a short time ago, would have been a great shock to Him; but now, with the growing consciousness of the work that He was to do, John's imprisonment was one of those outward events which, perplexing in itself, helped to make plain to Jesus that His full time was come, and that He must go forth without delay on His larger Galilean ministry.

Nazareth, where His home was, and where He was a familiar figure, would not do as a starting-place to make His first public appearance. If He was to preach or teach at all in Nazareth, He must first gain prestige elsewhere, and He chose the seaside place Capernaum, on the western coast of the Sea of Galilee, where He was not known, and so His words would, at any rate for a time, gain a ready hearing.

His message included John's and much more. It was the continuation of John's trumpet-call in the wilderness. The Kingdom of God is at hand. Repent and believe the Gospel or glad-tidings of the Kingdom. The coming Kingdom was the passionate yearning of all the best prophets in Israel. As they looked around and saw everywhere war and lust, oppression and crime, and justice trampled under foot, they clung only the closer to the hope that God would intervene and by His almighty power bring a reign of righteousness. The apocalyptic visionary, despairing altogether of this world, placed his hope in God's predestinarian purposes. Jesus, while His mind was saturated with the apocalyptic hope, yet preferred to follow the prophets who believed that the Kingdom was not to come to make Israel's heart right, but that Israel must

first be right in heart, and that would bring the Kingdom. Jesus, then would preach repentance—a repentance so deep that it would involve a complete change of heart and mind, and faith which, receiving Him and taking hold of the glad tidings that the Kingdom was at hand, would clench the repentance, and make converted Israel fit to receive the Kingdom.

His mission was to the nation. When an infant He had been made through circumcision a member of the nation that stood in covenant relationship with God. Now God had called Him to be a minister of the circumcision. He was Israel's true King come to offer Himself to them. If the people received their King, and at His bidding repented and believed, then He would make the emphatic promise prefixed by the solemn Amen that the Kingdom should come without delay, and that the promises made by God to the fathers should be fulfilled.[1] If they rejected Him, then the Kingdom could not come without the King. For a little while, through God's long-suffering and forbearance, the offer to the nation might be made by Christ's anointed apostles ; if their offer was also rejected, then would follow the national apostasy ; but since God's promises cannot fail, the fall of Israel might mean the opportunity of the Gentiles, and finally Israel be brought back in the latter days.

Since the coming of the Kingdom depended on the reception of the King, then, clearly, Jesus must present Himself openly to Israel as the Christ. But here was a difficulty. Jesus Himself had only gradually attained to self-consciousness. When at last the full conviction flashed on Him at His Baptism that He was the Christ, He knew that He had reached this knowledge by no outward process of reasoning, but by an inward revelation from the Father ; and any one else who should divine the secret of His person could learn only by a like revelation. And, therefore, though He wished to proclaim Himself openly He must proceed with reserve. Nothing would be easier than to gather a brutal and undiscerning crowd ready to proclain Him the Messiah as it had Judas the Galilean : His desire was that the nation should receive Him because it was taught by God.

Jesus' preaching of the Gospel was immediately successful. He won the hearts of the poor and kept them till the end. Everywhere they flocked to hear Him, and He soon found

[1] Rom. xv. 8.

that He was not able to meet all the opportunities of preaching the Gospel, and this determined Him to choose disciples whom He might first instruct and then send forth to proclaim the word of the Kingdom.

For these He looked among the people. Having learned for Himself the value of keeping within the human measure, He instinctively turned to those whose lives had been fashioned by everlasting and simple human needs. Those who grew up in homes where the pinch of poverty was often felt; who ventured into matrimony on small means, hoping somehow their daily bread would come; who lived precarious lives dependent on time and tide; who were bound together in human ties, sometimes irksome, always wholesome;—these seemed to Him more fitting for His purpose than those who through their social position or learning were removed from actual life and had become academic.

And such came to Him as the first-fruits of His preaching. He had sown His seed and the fruit had come to His hand with miraculous rapidity. As He passed by the seaside He saw fishermen casting their nets and often catching nothing. David came to think of God as the shepherd of Israel because he had first been a shepherd of sheep. A fisherman's life, too, was rich in teaching. When Jesus called James, John, Simon, and Andrew, and said, Come with me, and I will make you to become fishers of men, they forsook their nets and followed Him. That which they had learnt from their experience as fishermen lived on in them, and they became all the more wise in casting the Gospel net to catch men for the Kingdom.

As they followed Jesus and became witnesses of His daily life, and marked how each day He went about doing good, they were unconsciously prepared by this close companionship to help Him to gather in the great harvest of willing souls, and thus create the most favourable conditions for the Kingdom to come.

Jesus taught in private houses, by the seaside, or in the synagogues. In the houses He had no difficulty in leading the conversation to spiritual things. Since He could unite in Himself the human and the divine, it was very simple for Him to see the sacred in the secular; and so long as He saw it, no forcing was necessary to lead spontaneously from the material to the spiritual.

The seaside, especially when the sea was the Sea of Tiberias, was, as the meeting-place of great varieties of people, most

favourable for proclaiming the word ; and the synagogues were always open to Him so long as His doctrine was orthodox.

One Sabbath day early in His ministry He entered the synagogue in Capernaum and astonished the people by the innate authority which they immediately recognised in Him. His words were interrupted suddenly by a man in the congregation, apparently possessed, crying out in words that showed recognition of Jesus' Messiahship. Jesus quickly silenced him, and proceeded to exorcise the unclean spirit. The patient, after painful contortions of his body, became quiet ; and the people recognised that Jesus' authority was not only in teaching but also in a command over spirits.

This episode set the whole of Galilee talking, and threatened to stir the vulgar appetite for miracles that He had forsworn in His temptation. People with all kinds of sickness and disease were brought to Him, and the situation became perplexing. If His fame as a healer spread His whole time would be taken up in healing, His real mission would suffer, and He would be known throughout the land as a miracle-monger. Yet the sad cases brought to Him stirred His deep compassion, and He felt impelled to put forth His healing power ; but, lest an unholy desire for more miracles should be created, He enjoined strict secrecy. The secret was never kept ; and Jesus bore patiently the undesired results of deeds which He wrought not to draw attention to Himself, but solely out of love and compassion.

Coming out of the synagogue, Jesus and His disciples went to the house of Simon and Andrew. It was a full household, consisting of Simon, his wife, and his wife's mother, who earned her bit of bread-and-butter by drudging for the whole household. Because, perhaps, of overwork and want of consideration from the younger folk, she was ill with fever, and Jesus' attention was called to her. He took her by the hand and lifted her up. Immediately under His healing touch the fever left her, and by sheer force of habit she resumed her life of service.

The news spread like scandal. By the evening the whole city was at the door, clamouring for a touch of His hand that its sick might be healed. And so the thing He wished to avoid had happened, and He tried to escape by rising very early the next morning, and retiring to a place where He might be alone and pray. Even here He could not find solitude. He was followed by a crowd headed by Simon, who told Him how all men were seeking for Him.

Since there was no good to be gained by returning to a crowd which valued Him for His miraculous healing power, He determined to go to another town where there might be no distraction to His quiet preaching of repentance. Thus He went from town to town, preaching in the synagogues and in the open, sowing the word of the Kingdom. His fame as a healer went before Him and could not be silenced. A leper came to Him and piteously prayed for healing. Jesus moved to compassion touched Him and healed Him, with the enjoinder, which He must have known by now to be useless, to keep the matter to himself, and first to fulfil the religious obligation imposed by Moses. Like the rest he blazed it abroad, and Jesus was driven to make another futile attempt to escape into a desert place.

## III

Jesus after His Galilean circuit returned to Capernaum, where He was deeply impressed by His encounter with a Roman centurion. His mission was first to the Jews and through them to the Gentiles. When the Kingdom was come, then righteous Gentiles should enter into the Kingdom and become fellow-citizens with the saints, but the Gospel must first be preached to the Jews.

The centurion asked Him, by His word only, to heal his servant who was paralysed. Being accustomed both to obey the word of his superior officer and to give the word of command to those under him, he had often been struck by the immense power of words, and he now argued with sure instinct that if the human word carried such power, how much more powerful the divine word of a prophet might be to heal his servant. Jesus was astonished at his faith, and compared its sweet reasonableness with Israel's feverish faith in His magical power; and then, by a sudden inspiration, seizing the inner meaning of the situation, He spoke in the true prophetic spirit: Many shall come from the east and west, and shall sit down with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of heaven: but the children of the kingdom shall be cast out into outer darkness: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

And turning to the centurion He said: Go home; and as thou hast believed, so be it done unto thee. And his servant was healed in the same hour.[1]

[1] Matt. viii. 11–13.

Jesus returned to Simon's house in Capernaum, but not to rest. No sooner was He in the house than it was besieged by the usual crowd, which even removed the roof to force a paralytic into His presence. The man's paralysis was the result of youthful sin. Men who have sown their wild oats in their youth and then become strict in middle age are frequently very harsh to youthful offenders, but Jesus with a youth without reproach was never censorious. Tenderly He reassured the man that his sins were not past aid, saying, Son, thy sins be forgiven thee, and He set the religious scribes who were present reasoning in their blind hearts. Then, having dealt with the root of the sickness, He completed His work by healing with a word the man, who arose, and carried his bed, to the amazement of every one present.

This act of Jesus had deep significance. Since He must do acts of healing, He determined that every miraculous act forced from Him should have sacramental meaning for those who had eyes to see beneath the surface. Here the act of healing clenched the word of forgiveness, and made clear the startling truth that God gives authority and power to men to loosen each other from their sins.[1]

As Jesus went forth He saw Levi the tax-gatherer sitting at the receipt of custom, and He obeyed a sudden impulse to call him to be a disciple. Levi responded without hesitation, and invited Jesus to join a party he was expecting to dinner that same evening. Levi kept open house, into which a mixed company of swindlers and fast women entered, and with these Jesus sat down to eat and drink.

It was an unprecedented thing to do, and contrary to every tradition of the scribes and Pharisees touching a prophet's behaviour.

The Pharisees, who had sprung up since the Babylonian captivity, were devotees of the law of Moses in its entirety. This law was so extremely complicated and exacting that anyone who set himself to observe it with rigour was in danger of becoming exclusively engrossed in the externals of religion ; and unless he had an extraordinary grasp of spiritual things, like Moses himself, his spiritual life was speedily swallowed up. The externals of religion concern not only ritual, form, ceremony, sacrifices, washings, sacraments, but also morality, which treated from without and not from within becomes rigid, hard, and inflexible. Pharisaism at its best, as in Hillel,

[1] Matt. ix. 1–8.

induced just sufficient passion for morality for him to strike out a few fine aphorisms in which even the golden rule was anticipated, and inspired in his grandson Gamaliel a moral life which went side by side with a liberal culture, producing an enlightened toleration. But usually it made men who were already narrow in heart and mind still narrower. Their feelings and sympathies, never very abundant, ran into the minutiae of legal observances. Since God could not be indifferent to small things, being so great Himself, then clearly man could not be too punctilious in even the least point of ritual or ceremony. In their origin they were purists, and the testimony of their strict and pure lives in times of laxity had its value ; but in order to preserve their purity they conceived that they must keep themselves separate from sinners, and their aloof attitude was their undoing, for it developed, as it always must, a malignant growth of pride in the very core of their spirituality. That which preserved them for so long a time was their genuine regard for the people with whom they generally sided. The people responded to this care, so that whoever dealt with Pharisees or people had to make his account with both. One's attitude to sinners is a more determining factor in character than even one's attitude to the people, and the Pharisees, becoming a prey to spiritual pride, became also a type of the religious life in which love has gone, and its place is taken by fanaticism, bigotry, proselytism, hypocrisy, and, in the name of God and religion, murder. And this is the pitfall along the path of every religious life.

When we keep all this in mind then we perceive how revolutionary was Jesus' act when He chose a tax-gatherer for a disciple and sinners for His company. By a deep instinct He recognised more life and real goodness in sinners than in the righteous, and that they were more likely to respond to His preaching of repentance.

The scribes and Pharisees were not slow to cry out at this unwarranted behaviour. How is it that He eats and drinks with thieves and prostitutes ? To which Jesus answered with quick wit : They that are whole have no need of a physician, but they that are sick : I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance. [1]

Even the Pharisees might have known, if they had read the prophets aright, that mercy was of greater value in the sight of God than sacrifice.

[1] Mark ii. 17.

Here was an opportunity to bring up another matter that had given offence. The Pharisees, whose envy was already stirring at the popularity of Jesus, and who watched Him narrowly, had remarked that He and His disciples did not observe the fast days, whereas even John, who was an acknowledged prophet, taught his disciples to fast.

Jesus was just experiencing a great uprush of joy at His successful ministry, such as He had not known when the sick were clamouring at Simon's door, but which came in a flood when men and women of licentious lives heard in Him the right voice, and turned with passion to follow Him wheresoever He would lead. His joy secretly brought to mind that as Messiah He was the Bridegroom of Israel, and to the captious question about fasting he replied : Can the children of the Bride-chamber fast, while the Bridegroom is with them ? As long as they have the Bridegroom with them, they cannot fast. Then with a prescience of coming events He added : The days will come, when the Bridegroom shall be taken away from them, and then shall they fast in those days.[1]

These actual occurrences in the working out of His mission served to enlighten Him in the way He was to go. He became conscious that in following the Law of Life He was leaving behind dead laws, dead conventions, and dead traditions.

The spirit of life was distilling new wine, which would not accommodate itself to the old wine-skins without bursting them. Truth in the past had clothed itself in beautiful garments ; but now the garments were old and worn out beyond all patching. Yet while He would fashion a new garment and pour out new wine He would not despise the old. The wine of the past had been trodden in the wine-press of time, and the new wine could not compare with it for richness of flavour.

At present He might not forsee how far the little rift with the past would carry Him ; and, in any case, He was sure that He had nothing to do with destruction, that His mission was to fulfil ; but He thought it was possible to fulfil the law and the prophets without sacrificing a jot or tittle of the letter. The law said : Thou shalt not kill.—He said : Thou shalt not be angry with thy brother. The law : Thou shalt not commit adultery.—He : Thou shalt not desire a woman even in thought. The law : Thou shalt perform unto the Lord thy choice vows.—He : Do not add to your condemnation by making them at all, since you cannot even keep the law.

[1] Mark ii. 19–20.

The law : An eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth.—He : Resist not evil. The law : Love your countrymen.—He : Love your enemies. So far His claim to fulfil was amply justified : it was later, when the Pharisees quoted Moses against Him on divorce, that He was compelled to depart from Moses since He would suffer no divorce whatever. But even that was not an innovation, but a return to an older ordinance.

The Pharisees probably detected quicker than Jesus His little rift with the law, and whether it really existed already or not, their breach with Him was emphatic, and they determined on a course of unbending opposition.

This opposition became still more apparent to Jesus when He went through a corn-field one Sabbath, and His disciples began to pluck the ears of corn. The Pharisees might have cried, Thieves ! They cried, Sabbath-breakers ! and called forth from Jesus one of His consummate words : The Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath : therefore man is lord even of the Sabbath.[1]

His own lordship of the Sabbath He proceeded to manifest in the synagogue when He healed in the presence of the Pharisees a man with a withered hand. The issues now were equally clear to Himself and to His keen-eyed adversaries. The Pharisees took counsel with the Herodians how they might destroy Him, and He withdrew to the sea with His disciples. Here he found Himself pressed by a great multitude not only from Galilee, but from Jerusalem, and Idumaea much south of Jerusalem, from the other side of Jordan, and from such far-away Gentile towns as Tyre and Sidon. He was urged by the usual importunity to heal the sick ; and since His infinite pity never allowed Him to refuse such appeals, He healed many that were sick, and exorcised those that were possessed. Then, because the multitude continued to throng Him, He gave directions to His disciples to get ready a small boat that He might escape from the exacting crowd.

That night He spent in prayer on a mountain, and in the morning He chose from among His innumerable followers some more men to make up the number of His apostles. These were : Simon (whom He afterwards named Peter), James and John sons of Zebedee (called by Him Boanerges, the Sons of Thunder), Andrew, Philip, Bartholomew, Matthew, Thomas, James the son of Alphaeus, Thaddaeus, Simon the Canaanite, and Judas Iscariot.

[1] Mark ii. 27–28.

Jesus and His chosen disciples retired to a house ; but the seething crowds outside, which had come from so far, were not to be dispersed. With rude importunity they made it impossible for Him even to eat bread. Never before had they seen an exorcist with such power. The jealous scribes tried to explain that His power could come only from Beelzebub the prince of the devils, with whom this Jesus was clearly in league.[1]

Jesus would not let this pass. However unwillingly He used His miraculous gift He knew that it came from God ; and He put the unanswerable question to the scribes, How can Satan cast out Satan ? . . . If Satan rise up against himself and be divided, he cannot stand, but hath an end. He must first be bound before his house can be spoiled. Even if the mighty works of Jesus were unusual there was no excuse for the scribes to put them down to magic : for the smallest degree of spiritual understanding could discern between works done by the power of the Holy Ghost and works by an evil agency. Apparently the smallest degree was lacking in them ; and so there was nothing that the Holy Spirit could take hold of. That is a terrible condition. Jesus said that every sin and every blasphemy would be forgiven, but the man who had so persistently sinned against the Holy Spirit that he did not know His work when he saw it, such should never be forgiven, but was guilty of an eternal sin.

All this while Jesus was being watched by other eyes than those of the scribes. His relations thought it was time to interfere. Though the multitude took Him for a prophet, they knew better ; and with laudable zeal they would take hold of Him before the inflammable crowd was led astray by His madness. Finding they could do nothing, they fetched His mother and brothers, who, unable to get at Him, sent a message that they wanted to speak to Him. But Jesus, knowing too well what they would say, enunciated a law of spiritual kinship more binding even than that of blood. For in that mazed crowd there were men and women who heard in His words the will of God, and who were henceforth indissolubly bound to Him, and of them He said, Whosoever shall do the will of God is my brother, and my sister, and my mother.[2]

In these days Jesus' teaching of the deeds that should be the fruit of a true repentance took full shape.

In His thought the Kingdom was both present and future. In the present, the Kingdom was hidden and veiled : in the

[1] Mark iii. 22. [2] Mark iii. 35.

future, it should be manifested and unveiled, just as now He lived an obscure life, then, He would be revealed with power in the heavens. Now, no one could say, Lo here ! or Lo there ! for the Kingdom was within as the law of the spiritual life : then, the Kingdom, come with power, would not need any one to point to it. Now, the Kingdom within Him could be seen in His works of love, mercy, pity, healing, exorcism : then, Israel having repented, the Kingdom should be established ; now, He and all true penitents could commune with God as a loving Father, and live by faith a blessed life in the realisation of the Divine Presence ; then, they should see face to face, and their cup of joy should be full for ever. When He had prepared the people so that the Kingdom ruled within them as the law of their life too, then at the ripe moment the Kingdom would be manifested outwardly in power, and His coming would be outward too, like lightning in the heavens. For by a universal law whatsoever is covered and hidden must be uncovered and revealed. The two formulae by which He expressed the two modes of the Kingdom were, The Kingdom of heaven is within you, and, The Kingdom of heaven shall come with power; and the two are connected by the organic filament of life.

And so to the multitude He could say :

Blessed are the poor in spirit : for theirs is the Kingdom of heaven.

Blessed are they that mourn : for they shall be comforted.

Blessed are the meek : for they shall inherit the earth.

Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness : for they shall be filled.

Blessed are the merciful : for they shall obtain mercy.

Blessed are the pure in heart : for they shall see God.

Blessed are the peacemakers : for they shall be called the children of God.

Blessedness begins now with those into whose repentant and lowly hearts the Kingdom enters : and the full fruition is reached when the Kingdom comes with power.

He gave practical directions for the religious life. Almsgiving, fasting, and prayer must not be ostentatious, but as far as possible in secret.

Many lives are spoilt by over-anxiety. The cares of this life are apt to choke the things of the spirit. He Himself had been brought up in extreme poverty in Nazareth ; but He had learned a lesson of trust by watching the birds of the air and the lilies of the field. There was a divine order which those

who thought first of food and clothing disregarded. The heavenly Father knew the necessity of these things, but He could give His blessing only to those who kept in the divine order by seeking the Kingdom first.

Let them live one day at a time, not burdening themselves with to-morrow's evil, for they needed their strength to meet the evil of to-day. Let this be the rule of their life : All things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do the same to them : for this is the law and the prophets. The gate was narrow and the way difficult, but it would lead to life ; while the wide gate on to the broad way, which was entered by most people, would finally lead to destruction.

They must beware of false prophets. Prophets are known by their fruits.

He hints that a dark day is coming with rains and floods. Therefore let them build their houses on the rock of obedience to His word, then when the storm broke their house should stand, since it was not built upon sand.

## IV

Jesus' experience of the multitude of people who crowded around Him compelled Him to evolve a new method of dealing with it. Starting His ministry with such a large confidence in the people, and having His confidence so rudely checked, He must have known bitter disappointment. For it soon became clear that the multitudes who flocked to Him were not actuated by a desire to hear His message, but by a longing to see Him work miracles, and even the disciples would have miracles from Him at any price. A sudden cure or a powerful exorcism set them gaping and chattering, and comparing His more successful marvels with the quite tame examples that could be put to the account of the scribes. The truth was thrust upon Jesus however unwilling, and He now knew that the multitude was blind, stupid, and helpless.

The temptation that comes to the modern Nietzschean to turn from it with contempt never even presented itself to Jesus. He had no consciousness of an affronted, misunderstood, or misprised self. He might feel sad, but no resentment or disdain touched His spirit. Their helplessness like sheep without a shepherd, and bodily sufferings, always stirred His compassion and longing desire to help. He ceased to cast His pearls before them, since they could not understand their price,

and He preached a simple exoteric doctrine of repentance and faith. He insisted on the importance of faith, and offered for its standing-ground, not Himself, but the Kingdom of Heaven. He accepted the fact of their blindness, and fell back on God's power and election, which alone could open their eyes. Thus though no preacher ever had such vast crowds to listen to Him, no preacher ever set so little store by numbers.

The numbers availed to stir the jealousy of the Pharisees, who depended on their influence with the people for keeping their self-respect. There is strange irony in the fact that they were filled with poisonous envy of that which did not elate but sadden Jesus. For the sake of the few souls in the crowds whose hearts God might touch, He continued His ministry to them, but chose the new form of parables.

His ministry was not without its joys. There were many lawless men and women who heard Him gladly and changed their lives. Among the latter was a woman, Mary Magdalene, notorious for her shameless life. Yet she heard, understood, and followed Jesus where the more respectable continued deaf. Also many other women were attracted to Him. There was much that was feminine in the personality of Jesus ; and this, combined with strength and self-control in a man, has always drawn women who desire a comrade rather than a lover. Hence it happened that, when Jesus had completed His first Galilean circuit, He found Himself possessed with a band of women friends who gave Him love, food, clothing, and little comforts, and who remained faithful to the end. The most important of these were, besides Mary Magdalene, Joanna the wife of Herod's steward Chuza, Mary the mother of James and Joses, the mother of James and John, and Susannah.

From among His hearers Jesus had chosen His twelve apostles, and He hoped to impart to them His pearls which the multitude rejected, so that by their understanding of the mysteries of the Kingdom they might help Him in His work of evangelising the people, and also form His elect congregation or church after the Kingdom was come.

Henceforth the teaching of the people and the teaching of the apostles formed two parts of Jesus' work. The exoteric things—repentance, faith, good works—were for the people ; the esoteric things—the mysteries of the Kingdom—were for the apostles, and his teaching in parables served both people and apostles

There was another and deep reason for His use of the parable. His premonitions of a day when the Bridegroom should be taken away, and of a coming storm, were signs of His conviction that Israel would not repent, and that He should be rejected. So settled was this conviction that it decided Him to change His mode of teaching. Here, as in every crisis of His life, we see Him adhering closely to the Scriptures. Moses and Joseph were both rejected and went forth into Gentile lands. Each waited many years before he was acknowledged by his brethren. Isaiah prophesied of a hardness and blindness of the people and of the conversion of the Gentiles. Jesus interpreted Isaiah as referring to His day. The people was not merely the poor, but the whole nation which before His eyes was becoming stony hard and blind, His presence serving to accelerate the terrible process. And therefore it was useless to speak to it in direct speech, and He chose parable for the sake of any individual whose heart God might touch. In after years, when Israel's rejection of Messiah and His messengers was a completed fact, those who pondered on the awful national apostasy were unanimous in believing with Jesus that it had been foreknown by God and revealed by the Spirit to Isaiah.[1]

There was a deep instinct at work here, for in the soul of Jesus was a passionate desire to create, which manifested itself in the re-creation of the prophetic and apocalyptic vision, in the creation of His outward life, in the creation of the conditions to bring the Kingdom, in the creation of His church within the Kingdom ; and in the imaginative utterance which He gave to His teaching in His parables. The people easily took in the parable, which, seizing the imagination, could be retained in the memory ; and then, at any time, God might bless the living images, and cause them to yield fruit in their lives.

The first parables were given at the seaside to a great multitude while He sat in a boat a little way out on the sea. As always, they were lessons on the Kingdom, how that now the Kingdom was secret and hidden, but how it would be manifest and outward. John the Baptist, Jesus, and His disciples went about sowing the seed which, falling into the earth, lived a hidden life. The seed had to contend with thorns, tares, and birds, but provided it fell on good ground and was retained, it brought forth fruit.

[1] Isa. vi., Matt. xiii. 14, Mark iv. 12, Luke viii. 10, John xii. 38, Acts xxviii. 25.

The hidden life of the germinating seed was full of mystery. The man who has sown it goes his way sleeping and rising, and the seed springs he knows not how, but when the fruit is brought forth, he gathers it in because the harvest is come.

There is an utter disproportion between what is sown and the harvest. A grain of mustard-seed is of the smallest, yet it grows into a large shrub with great branches on which the birds can perch.

The disciples were very slow to understand what the parables meant, and they took the opportunity when alone to ask Jesus. With infinite patience He explained how necessary it was that the word of the Kingdom should be received, believed, understood, and held fast with much patience if it was to bear fruit ; otherwise Satan, or tribulation, or the cares of life, or riches, or the lusts of other things entering in, choke the word and there is no fruit.

When the seed was sown under favourable conditions, it quickly brought the harvest under God's blessing ; and the Kingdom, which was already at work secretly in them and in those who heard their word, would also ensure quickly the great harvest, when the Son of Man should send forth His angels and gather out of the Kingdom all iniquitous things, and cast them into a furnace of fire, while the righteous should shine forth as the sun in the Kingdom of their Father.

Jesus, knowing the power of words, added : Take heed what ye hear. The power of hearing words increases with use : Unto you that hear (the mystery) shall more be given.[1]

Jesus not only believed in predestination, but He recognised a fundamental difference in men, and so He could declare that more should be given to those who have something to begin with ; but those who have not lose the little they have. It seems hard and unjust, but all experience teaches us that it is true.

Modern Christian Socialism has been built up on the assumption that Jesus taught the fundamental equality of men. He taught emphatically the fundamental brotherhood of men owning one Father, but He was equally emphatic in recognising an aristocracy of elect souls, and we shall not hold the balance in His teaching unless we keep this in mind.

When Jesus had delivered these parables He pushed out to sea, and intended to go with His disciples to Gadara, on the east of the Sea of Tiberias. While crossing a sudden storm

[1] Mark iv. 24.

broke over the sea which filled the disciples with terror, and they unceremoniously awoke Him from His much needed sleep with the words, Master, carest Thou not that we perish ?[1] Jesus arose and pacified them, and the storm passed as suddenly as it came. Jesus, who had fondly hoped that at least His chosen disciples would understand, found them, after all His careful explanations of the mystery of the Kingdom, still without faith, and ready as ever to thrust a miracle on to Him.

It is likely that Jesus had come to Gadara for rest, but He was not to find it. No sooner was He landed than there met Him an unusually distressing case of possession. The possessed man lived among the tombs, and was of such abnormal physical strength that it was found impossible to bind him At the sight of Jesus he at once became quiet, and fell down before Him. Jesus exorcised the evil spirit, and to the intense astonishment of the Gadarenes they found the man sitting at the feet of Jesus, clothed, and in his right mind. From whatever cause a herd of swine that was feeding on the mountain side rushed down the steep incline, and were choked in the sea. It was at once supposed that the spirits which Jesus exorcised had passed into the swine ; and so terrified were the Gadarenes at such an exhibition of power, that they came to Jesus and begged Him to go away from their coasts.

As He was departing the man that had been possessed asked that he might go with Him. But Jesus sent him back to his friends, and (contrary to His custom) told him to testify to the things which the Lord had done for him.

Since Jesus was leaving Gadara at once, it would not affect His work, even if the Gadarenes thought of nothing but His miracle. Perhaps a miracle was the only way of reaching them ; for the fact that Jesus' power had terrified them shows that they were a people of primitive instincts.

When Jesus had landed at Capernaum, much people had gathered together waiting for Him. A ruler of the synagogue, Jairus by name, came and knelt to Him, beseeching Him to come and heal his little daughter. Jesus went with him, followed by a great crowd. In the crowd was a woman who had in the last twelve years spent her last penny on doctors who vainly tried to heal her of an issue of blood. She succeeded in touching Jesus, and immediately she was well. Jesus at once perceived that virtue had gone out of Him, and learning the truth He addressed the frightened woman tenderly : Daughter,

[1] Mark iv. 38.

thy faith hath saved thee, go in peace, and be whole of thy plague. Just then messengers came to Jairus to say that his daughter was dead. But Jesus encouraged his faith : Fear not, only believe. When he came to the house and found the professional mourners busy wailing, He turned their tears to scornful laughter by announcing that the maid was not dead but only asleep. Then putting them out, and taking with Him Peter, James, and John, He took the child by the hand, and she arose, and He commanded, since they were too stupefied to think of anything, that they should give the lass something to eat.

Whether she was really dead or not, they believed that she was ; and Jesus enjoined strict silence, for the report that He had worked the stupendous miracle of raising one from the dead was not at all what He wished. As He left the house He determined to go to His own village, Nazareth, where He had been brought up.

## V

Jesus' visit to His home was a strange experience. He would meet old men and women who had seen Him grow up, young men who had grown up with Him, and a still younger generation of little children who to Him were strangers. The report of His doings had reached them, and been duly discussed. They were not to be carried away by the popular belief that He was a prophet ; it was much more likely that He was a little mad. Whoever since the world began had eyes to see a prophet in a near relation ? A mother may think her goose a swan, but even she is slow to think her son a prophet.

Jesus made straight for the synagogue and began to teach. At once his hearers were arrested by His authoritative way of speaking, and by the wisdom and grace of His words. How was it possible that one they had known as a carpenter could speak like that, and also do such mighty works ? Why ! they knew His mother Mary, and His cousins James and Joses, and Judas and Simon ! Jesus was outside their homely calculations and merely confounded them. As with the stupid crowd, Jesus felt no resentment. His spiritual stature had become so great that He could see humour in the situation, and He remarked with a gleam in His eye : A prophet is not without honour, but in his own village, and among his own relations, and in his own home.[1] Yet he was astonished at their un-

[1] Mark vi. 4.

belief, not in Himself, for that did not greatly trouble Him, but in His message of the Kingdom. Their lack of faith made them so hard and unreceptive that He was powerless to do more than lay His hands on a few sick folk and heal them.

## VI

The time had now come for Jesus to send His apostles out to preach the gospel of the Kingdom.

Jesus, while withholding from the people things that they would not understand, had no reserves with His disciples. To them it was given to know the mystery of the Kingdom, and the mystery includes all those intimate and precious things which lie in the mystic's treasury in all ages. Jesus' large trust in them, that they would understand the things which to Him were as simple and evident as the sunlight, was often disappointed. They appear to have been unusually lacking in intuition, but eventually they did come to understanding, and Jesus' over-confidence was justified.

We have seen that He chose them not because they were exceptional, but rather average men.

Peter was already old, if we may trust tradition. It is astonishing how quickly a man takes on a final hard crust of character once his adolescence is over. Peter can have been no exception ; but he kept two valuable qualities of the child —love and impulsiveness. These were the things by which Jesus could reach him, and make him again, but it took time. Afterwards through the terrible days when the Bridegroom was taken away from them as well as through the painful self-knowledge forced upon him by his denial of his Friend, he was made again, and Peter the sinner emerged from the crucible Peter the Saint.

James and John had been surnamed by Jesus Boanerges, Sons of Thunder. This surname is the key to their characters, for John as revealed in the Scriptures, and not as painted by the masters, was a son of thunder utterly captivated by the Lamb of God. If we believe that the writings which bear St John's name, if not actually written by him, were at least inspired by his teaching, then we shall see that when the zealous and narrow apostle, who wanted to call down fire from heaven in the manner of Elijah on the churlish Samaritans, became the apostle of love, he was as effectually re-made as was his friend Peter.

Most of the others are mere names, which served the fourth Evangelist as types. Thus Thomas stands for gloomy doubt, which demands that sight shall precede faith ; Philip, the demand of the natural man for a bodily sight of God ; Nathaniel, who has been identified with Bartholomew, the true child of Jacob, who wrestling under a fig-tree, like Jacob with the angel, reaches a guileless simplicity, which is the supreme grace of the mystic, and which earns for him the name Israel, a Prince with God.

Nowadays, we have been told, men make their souls by Shakespeare, or Balzac, or Goethe. These men were made by being with Jesus, and it was His unconscious influence, we may well believe, that made them. Pippa passes, and a community is regenerated. A little child puts its tiny hand into the crabbed hand of Silas Marner, and the old miser is renewed at the springs of his being. These rough, uncouth, illiterate disciples spend but a little while with Jesus, and they are not only re-made, but they re-made the world.

There was one single exception. A soul cannot pour itself into another that has no spark of love. The presence of Jesus which made the apostles unmade Judas, and he returned like a marred vessel into the hands of the Great Potter.

Jesus prepared them for persecutions and slander, reminding them that that was the lot of God's servants, and that it was really a sign of blessedness. They were to be the salt of the earth, the light of the world ; and, as lighted candles, they were to give light to the whole household. Their steady shining would cause men spontaneously to give glory to the Father.

As those to whom Jesus had imparted His best without reserve, they were to guard their treasure carefully. Their part, too, was to preach repentance and faith, and they were not lightly to give that which was holy to dogs, or to cast their pearls before swine. They were to preach in the cities of Israel, and not to the Gentiles or even to the Samaritans.

Besides preaching they were to manifest the power of the hidden Kingdom by healing the sick and deeds of mercy. They were to go out two and two, taking nothing for their journey except a stick—no wallet, no bread, and no money ; sandals they might have for their feet, but one coat was to be sufficient ; yet they were not to be anxious about their life, but to consider how God fed the birds, and clothed the flowers, for to them, too, food and clothing would be given by grateful men and women blessed through their ministry.

In dealing with men they would need to be as wise as serpents and harmless as doves.

So far Jesus could speak from his own experience ; then, falling back on the dark picture, drawn by the apocalyptists, of the great tribulation immediately preceding the coming of the Kingdom, He warned them in the apocalyptic language how they should be brought before kings and rulers. They were not to premeditate how they should make their defence, for as recipients of the outpouring of the Spirit preceding the end they would be taught what to say. They were not to expect peace. Jesus had brought fire on earth and a sword. They should see households divided, fathers against children, children against parents ; they themselves should be hated ; but by patient endurance of the predestined tribulation they should win their souls, even if their bodies were killed. For those who sought to save their lives should lose them in the great tribulation, and those who lost them for His sake should be raised up again to find them in the Kingdom.

They were His representatives. When they were refused they were to shake off even the dust from their feet ; but whosoever received them received also Jesus, and whosoever received Jesus received God who sent Him. Before they had passed through all the cities of Israel the Son of Man would come.

And so Jesus sent them out with a great hope in His heart. Were there not signs of a plenteous harvest ? He had instructed His disciples to pray to the Lord of the Harvest, not for more souls, but for more labourers to gather in the harvest of souls. Now He had sent forth the labourers, and He would await quietly the Great Event.

## VII

As soon as His disciples departed, Jesus Himself started on a tour through many cities, teaching and preaching. He intended it to be His last great effort of preparation for the coming Kingdom.

At this time messengers came to Jesus from John the Baptist, saying, Art thou he that should come or do we look for another ? Jesus with exquisite thoughtfulness sent a message, in the words of John's favourite prophet Isaiah, pointing out how the blind received their sight, and the lame walked, the lepers were cleansed, and the deaf heard, the dead were raised,

and the poor had the Gospel preached unto them. John could draw his own conclusions, and win his own blessedness, for Jesus added, Blessed is he who shall not find in me an occasion of stumbling.

Being surrounded by the multitudes, Jesus turned to them and took John for his text. What had they expected to see when they went out into the wilderness to John? Certainly not a reed shaken with the wind, or a man dressed like a prince. Perhaps they expected a prophet? Jesus kindled and declared with enthusiasm: I tell you truly, and more than a prophet; and then with a passionately free interpretation of prophecy He added, that John was the messenger foretold by Isaiah that should prepare the way of God. No woman ever bore a greater son, yet in the coming Kingdom the least should be greater than he. John had set himself with violence to compel the Kingdom to come, and the law and the prophets had culminated with John. Then, knowing that He was announcing a difficult truth, He added: And if ye are willing to receive it, this is Elijah who was to come. He who has ears to hear, let him hear. The people had reckoned that both John and Jesus were prophets, but it was startling for them to be told in words of burning conviction that John was Elijah.

By this time Jesus could stand aside and define quietly and clearly to Himself the difference between Himself and the Baptist. Jesus piped, John mourned; Jesus ate meat and drank wine without apologies, John denied himself meat and was a teetotaler; John separated himself from sinners, Jesus ate and drank with them; John treated his body with austerity, Jesus with consideration; John was dour, Jesus genial; John was religious, Jesus alive. Neither gave satisfaction to that generation. It declared scornfully that Jesus was a glutton, and drank, and that John's inspiration came from a familiar spirit.

Then Jesus, as one who seizes the whole question without bias, recognising the respective values of the ascetic life and the humanly genial life, will not pit one against the other, or say that one is better than the other, but in one pregnant sentence infers that both John and He are children of wisdom, Wisdom is justified of all her children. The thought of wisdom brought to memory a fine passage in one of the books of Wisdom which had sunk deeply into Jesus' mind.[1] By one of these intuitive flashes of genius He made the transition from wisdom to Himself, and turning to the crowd uttered those words that have

[1] Ecclesiasticus li. 26–27.

been treasured ever since in the heart of Christendom : Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me ; for I am meek and lowly in heart : and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.[1]

## VIII

Jesus' mission to the great cities was not successful.

Cities meant so much more to Him than to us. It is true that the mere names London, Paris, Berlin, instantaneously awake in us a thousand associations ; but to Jesus every city had a strong individuality and a spiritual significance. Only in William Blake, in modern times, is there anything like this deep feeling for cities and places.

City life at its best is life at its intensest. Perhaps the throb of the city called out a responding throb from Him who lived such an overbrimming life. He began in joy to preach to Capernaum, Chorazin, Bethsaida, hoping that they would turn and repent, and present the wondrous sight of cities that had become veritable cities of God.

But they remained obdurate. In each city there were here and there simple souls who heard His words and silently obeyed. He was thankful for that, and thanked His heavenly Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that He had hidden these things from the wise and prudent, and had revealed them unto babes ; but He felt that in refusing His message the cities were preparing themselves for a terrible judgment in the Last Day, and that even Sodom should be judged less severely for its unnatural vice than those favoured cities in their wilful blindness.

While Jesus was on this last missionary round, John the Baptist was beheaded in prison, and on His return the disciples of John came and told Him about it ; and at the same time His own disciples returned, much elated at their success in healing and exorcising.

The double event marked a deep crisis in the life of Jesus. His disciples had returned and the Kingdom had not come ; and John, the first great preacher of the coming Kingdom, lay dead. The thought of death took up its gloomy abode in the hitherto joyous soul of Jesus, and forced upon Him the consideration that He had made His account with life but not with death, and that before the mighty event of the coming

[1] Matt. xi. 28–30.

Kingdom, death would insist on being reckoned with to the uttermost.

What was the significance of John's death? We may be certain that as the death of one whom He revered He felt, not overwhelming sorrow as those who have no sort of answer to the riddle of life, but a chastened and calm assurance that neither John nor his work had perished. In his work he had sown the seed of the Kingdom; and when the Kingdom was come, he would be raised up again to take his high place in it as a prince and a ruler.

So far there was nothing perplexing about John's death. But the death itself and his shed blood? What was the mystical significance of blood? From the day that Cain arose and murdered Abel, through many generations which witnessed the blood of prophets, and not only prophets, but countless soldiers slain in bloody battles, what has it meant? Assuredly blood is either the intensest symbol of all, or it is meaningless, and if meaningless, then the riddle of the universe remains unsolved.

The blood of Abel was the visible sign of both righteousness and murder. Through all the ages blood has had this double significance, and though it has witnessed to a world marred with anger, strife, and murder, it has in the same moment witnessed to self-offering and sacrifice scarcely heeded amidst the terrific din, but quietly persistent, and in the end strong and abundant to wash away the iniquity of the world. There was a cup slowly being filled as each generation rolled away. That cup was nearly full, yet not quite. John's blood had not filled it; perhaps there was need of the blood of One Other to cause the cup to overflow, and then God would put forth His Almighty Power and bring the Kingdom.

The mysterious power of life in Jesus was shaping His destiny differently from what He had first imagined; and He must be alone and in prayer if He would catch the intimation of the Divine Will, and so learn what He must do next. There was no possibility of being alone on the shores of Gennesaret: He must go right away from the importunity of the people.

The apostles, too, were in need of rest after their missionary journeys. While Jesus was disentangling His own destiny, His apostles returned full of their doings, and specially elated at their new powers of exorcism. Jesus saw in this the casting out of evil from the heavenly places, and the beginning of a complete victory over the serpentine and stinging power of evil;

but He warned them at the same time not to think too much of their miraculous powers, but to rejoice rather that their names were enrolled in the book of life. He then invited them to come with Him into a quiet spot where they might rest awhile.

This was somewhere in the neighbourhood of Bethsaida. Multitudes followed Him and remained with Him all day. He showed no impatience. They seemed to Him as sheep without a shepherd, and His shepherd-heart was moved to compassion. He would not send them away at the bidding of His disciples. They were the poor, the hungry, the thirsty, the sorrowful and heavy-burdened to whom the Kingdom should bring deep and lasting consolation. He would give them some pledge and token that they should have their part in the Kingdom.

Finding that His disciples had among them five loaves and two fishes, He commanded them to make the great company sit down on the green grass in ranks of hundreds and fifties. Then taking the loaves and fishes, and looking up to heaven, He consecrated them, and gave broken bits to the disciples to distribute among the people. Everyone had a little, and when the sacramental meal was over, the disciples, at the command of Jesus, gathered up the fragments into the baskets that there might be no waste.

Having given the people this token that they should eat bread in Messiah's Kingdom, He sent His disciples on to Bethsaida, alone He sent away the people, and then retired to a mountain near Bethsaida to pray.

Jesus rejoined his disciples in a house at Bethsaida, and the next few days were spent in ministering to the sick and suffering. One man was brought to Him who was deaf and defective in speech ; and knowing the efficacy of His healing touch, the people asked Him to lay His hands upon him. Jesus took the man aside, put His fingers into his ears, then, wetting His finger, touched the tip of his tongue, and said with a sigh : Be opened. At once he recovered from his deafness, and there was a marked improvement in his speech.

Another man brought to Him was blind. Jesus touched his eyes with His moistened fingers, and laid His hands on him. The man then saw men as trees walking. Jesus again laid His hands on his eyes, and he saw every man clearly. Jesus vainly enjoined secrecy in both cases.

Jesus did many mighty works in Bethsaida, and whenever possible retired alone to a mountain. Outwardly He was calm : inwardly he was passing through a storm, and in His

mighty wrestling with those everlasting questions which goad and press for an answer in every age, He was seeing ever more clearly that the path to death was the path to life, that the Bridegroom Himself must be taken away not in the manner of Enoch or Elijah, but by the inglorious way of death, that He must drink the bitter cup to the dregs, if He was to be the everlasting Bridegroom, holding forth the cup of joy to whomsoever should come and drink. Yet the passage of death though sharp would be short, for it would bring the Kingdom, and He would be raised up from death by the power of God, and as a King possess the Kingdom. And when He saw clearly His destiny and saw it as His Father's will, a mighty resolve arose in His soul. He would not die in a spirit of dumb acquiescence to an inflexible destiny. He would gather together His whole being and make His blood and death a passionate free-will offering to His heavenly Father, and go to death not as a slave but a King.

## CHAPTER IV

### THE JESUS OF CRITICISM—*(continued)*

### IX

Jesus, on one occasion, when He retired from Bethsaida to His mountain, took with Him Peter, James, and John. While in intense meditation and prayer He passed into ecstasy with such vehement energy that He carried His disciples with Him, and they saw Him transfigured even to His garments, and Elijah and Moses talking with Him. Peter terrified, and not knowing what to say, proposed at random to build three booths, one for Jesus, one for Moses, and one for Elijah ; but a cloud overshadowed them, and the voice that Jesus had heard at His Baptism was now heard by His three most intimate disciples, This is my beloved Son : hear Him. Then the vision passed, and they saw Jesus only with themselves.

This vision became to the chosen three a fine memory in dark days to come. The Master anticipated the darkness. As the fruit of His solitary conflict He knew that death lay before Him, and He knew also how far He had left His disciples behind in their understanding of God's purpose. Their hope was to see their Master exalted and glorified in the coming Kingdom. Jesus foresaw their utter bewilderment when they should begin to apprehend His humiliation and death, and so to them, in answer to Jesus' prayer we may presume, was granted a vision of Jesus in earthly glory, superseding Moses and Elijah, and fulfilling the prophets' vision of Israel's lofty destiny.

Moses and Elijah spoke to Jesus of His decease. The intimation of death was staggering to the disciples. It shattered their picture of the future, and in their utter bewilderment they caught at the first difficulty that bobbed in their chaotic minds. Why do the authorities say that Elijah must first come ? Jesus had thought that out, and already uttered His thoughts to the people ; now He

repeated the same words to His disciples, It is true that Elijah comes first, and restores all things; but I tell you that Elijah has indeed come, and they have treated him just as they liked, as it was written of him.

Yet there was no Scripture that Elijah as the forerunner was to die. Jesus' reading of the Old Testament had convinced Him that death was the inevitable lot of a faithful prophet. Even as a prophet He Himself must be put to death. That the three might have grasped. It was when He told them that as Son of Man, as the Messiah, He would suffer many things, and be set at naught, then they were too perplexed to have any power left of listening to dark sayings.

This revelation of Jesus' humiliation and glory was not to be blabbed about, and He enjoined for the present strict secrecy.

When Jesus returned to the rest of His disciples, He found them pressed by a great multitude, among which the scribes were conspicuous. All the commotion was caused by the failure of the disciples to exorcise the spirit from an unfortunate lad brought to them by his father. Jesus questioned the father, and heard from him of the terrible convulsions to which the child was subject. Even then he was seized with a fit. Jesus, noticing that the crowd was increasing and becoming more and more excited, exorcised the spirit, and taking the lad by the hand lifted him up.

Afterwards in the house the disciples asked Jesus why they had failed, and He gently reproved them by saying that it was through lack of prayer.

Jesus again made an effort to go away from the multitude, and thought of Gennesaret, for when He was there last the inhabitants had begged Him to depart from their coasts. No sooner, however, had He arrived than He was recognised, and the inhabitants rushed to Him with their sick. He healed them by laying on His hands, and departed as soon as He could and came to Dalmanutha and the coasts of Magdala.

Here were some Pharisees sent expressly from Jerusalem to watch Him. Jesus knew as well as the Pharisees that an irreconcilable quarrel was opened between Him and them. They hoped to find in Him something that would justify them if they put Him to death. Jesus knew already that He should die at their hands. His language to them in consequence became scathing and denunciatory. The best morality of the old world maintained that there was a place for righteous anger,

and that the soul's health sometimes depended upon its power of scorn expressing itself in words of white-heat anger. Jesus accepted this traditional morality. Yet He departed from it at the very end, when the Pharisees had won, and nailed Him to the cross ; then His defeat vanished in a divine understanding of His adversaries, and He forgave them.

The Pharisees were not long in finding a cause of complaint against Jesus at Dalmanutha. An extreme punctiliousness in washing their hands was a part of their traditional religion ; and they were disgusted to observe that Jesus' disciples neglected this imperative obligation before meals, and that Jesus was to blame for allowing it. Jesus, without ceremony, called them hypocrites, and, though Himself actuated by tradition, proceeded to contrast tradition with the word of God, and to show that the Pharisees by their use of tradition succeeded only in a casuistical twisting of God's word.

Then calling the people to Him, and bidding them to make a real effort to understand, He taught them that the things that make a man unclean are not those that enter into him, but those that come out of him ; and afterwards in a house He further explained to His dull disciples, that the things He referred to were evil thoughts, lasciviousness, murders, thefts, blasphemy, pride, and folly—that these were the excrementitious things that came out of man's heart and made him unclean.

The Pharisees made another thrust, and asked Him for a sign as a credential of His gospel. Having forsworn to work miracles to prove His divine mission, and regarding such miracles as had been forced from Him as evidence of His compassion, and, to those who already had understanding, of the inward Kingdom, He gave a deep sigh, and said curtly : Why does this generation seek after a sign ? I tell you truly, there shall no sign be given unto this generation. The Pharisees as spiritual leaders of the people should have been above the vulgar demand for a sign. There was a sting in the short word of Jesus, and though they probably missed its point their hatred of Jesus found fuel to nourish it.

Jesus left them and embarked with His disciples and sailed to the other side of the lake.

On the way, thinking over what had just happened, he told His disciples to beware of the leaven of the Pharisees. They supposed that He was referring to their improvidence in taking no bread with them. Jesus asked them how it was that they did not understand. He Himself had entered on the last act

of His mighty soul tragedy, and here were His chosen disciples putting a perfectly puerile interpretation on His words.

Jesus, in His efforts to be alone, decided to go into the neighbourhood of Tyre and Sidon. There He procured a house and wished His arrival to be kept secret. But His fame had long since preceded Him, and at once a woman who was a Greek, and a Syrophenician by nation, came to Him and, kneeling to Him, begged Him to exorcise the spirit from her daughter.

Jesus' mission was not yet to the Gentiles. He knew by His experience some time ago with the Roman centurion, that He could find simplicity and great faith among them, and that these precious qualities would give any Gentile the right of entry into the Kingdom ; but knowing also that the Kingdom tarried till the Jews repented, and His time was short, He must not be tempted aside from His ministry to Israel. He told her with some harshness that the children must first be fed, and that it was not right to give the children's bread to dogs. She, accustomed no doubt to being called by the Jews a Gentile dog, answered with ready wit that the dogs under the table ate of the children's crumbs. Jesus, delighted with her answer, told her to go home and she would find her daughter well.

With this miracle on the top of His fame it was clear that He could not be alone ; and He left the neighbourhood and went to the villages of Caesarea Philippi.

## X

On the way He asked His disciples, since they must have heard many opinions on their missionary journeys, Whom men supposed Him to be. They told Him that some thought He was John the Baptist, some Elijah, and some, one of the old prophets come back. Then He pressed the question home to them : Whom did they suppose that He was ? The disciples of Jesus had believed from the day that they first followed Him that He was the Messiah, but they were far from understanding all that was involved in the Messianic claim of their Master. They could easily believe, as the people could, in a political Messiah who should establish David's throne in Jerusalem, and deliver them from the hated foreign yoke. Nor was that faith all illusion. The Messiah was not a national idiosyncrasy on a par with the Mahdi in the Soudan, as has been

irreverently suggested in our time. St Paul, many years later, in his epistle to the Romans, declared that Israel's unbelief would not finally frustrate the purpose of God, and that after the fullness of the Gentiles was come, Israel would repent, and Jesus enter on His Messianic reign.[1]

Jesus' interpretation of His calling included all this, and much more. From the day of His Baptism He had had the awful consciousness that He was the Son of God. His pressing question to His disciples : Whom do you say that I the Son of Man, am, was to discover whether any of them had divined the deeper mystery of His Person. Peter answered, Thou art the Christ, *the Son of the living God.* Jesus turned to him in deep joy, and pronounced him, Blessed ; for he had reached this faith, not by any reasoning process, but by the revelation which God had so willed. Since all whom God called must come to Jesus and confess Him to be the Son of God, Jesus saw in Peter's confession the foundation faith of His Church, and looking beyond the coming Kingdom to His elect congregation, and playing on Peter's name, said, Thou art Peter, and on this rock I will build my church ; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. He added that He would give him the keys of the Kingdom, so that whatsoever he bound on earth should be bound in heaven, and whatsoever he loosed on earth should be loosed in heaven.[2]

We, to-day, who know that Jesus is the Son of God know too that our conviction has come through no processes of the rational faculty : we are obliged to say in a final analysis that we know by an inward revelation which God has given to us. Here we touch the foundation rock on which the whole superstructure is built. Not only the first disciples of Jesus, but also His believers in all ages have known that the turning-point in their lives, their conversion as they passed consciously from death into life, was contingent on their spiritual apprehension of the Christ. The disciples filled with this burning conviction worked both backwards and forwards ; and this gives the light by which we are to read St Luke's beautiful stories of the Nativity, and the later stories given by all four Evangelists of the Resurrection and the Ascension.

From that day Jesus spoke constantly to His chosen disciples of His death and resurrection, which with great sufferings He should accomplish at Jerusalem.

Peter was still unable to fit the idea of suffering with

[1] Rom. xi. 12, 23–32. [2] Matt. xvi. 13–19.

his conception of the Christ, and said so to Jesus, who, passing through a time of extreme nervous tension, turned on him fiercely, and calling him Satan told him that his thoughts had an earthy rather than a heavenly origin.

Jesus had not succeeded in being alone, but He had wrestled through the dark enigma of His destiny in spite of constant interruption, and He saw that He must go straight up to Jerusalem—His own city by Messianic right—and there fight out to the bitter end His controversy with the scribes, Pharisees, and priests.

The thought of atonement already possessed His mind. His deep experience and mental strife had opened up to Him the inmost meaning of the fifty-third chapter of Isaiah. By a spontaneous transition He saw Himself as the suffering servant of the Lord bearing the chastisement of the peace of His people, carrying their griefs and their sorrows, wounded for their transgressions, oppressed and afflicted yet not complaining, going like a lamb to the slaughter, and making His soul and body an offering for sin. He, the lamb, had also the strength of the lion. By forcing His way through the jaws of death, and compelling His Father to raise Him up, He would make atonement for the sins of the people ; and then if Israel, probed to the heart, turned and repented, the Kingdom would come, He the strong should divide the spoil with the weak, and be a shepherd-king to the nation for which He died.

## XI

Jesus departed from the neighbourhood of Caesarea Philippi, and set His face like a flint to go straight to Jerusalem. He tried to pass secretly through Galilee, and confine His teaching to His disciples to prepare them for the coming events. Again and again He repeated to them that He should suffer many things, be rejected and put to death, but that He would rise again. Such announcements only plunged them into sheer bewilderment, which Jesus nevertheless well understood, since He Himself had come so hardly to such a reading of the prophetic and apocalyptic writers.

In Galilee He repeated, as far as He could with discretion, to the people what He had privately said to His disciples. The great tribulation foretold by the prophets was at hand ; indeed, His determined death was part of that tribulation, and would avail to shorten it. But though shortened it would

be a time of great temptation to the people, and He exhorted them to follow after Him by self-denial. They too would only lose their lives by clutching at them. Let them die willingly for His sake and the Gospel's, and they should be raised up to take their joyful part in the Kingdom. That alone mattered. A man's soul was of more value than the possession of the whole world. But they must not be ashamed of Him in the coming tribulation, or the Son of Man would be ashamed of them when He came in the glory of the Father with His holy angels. He concluded by assuring them that the end was at hand, and that there were some standing there who should not die before they had seen the Kingdom of God come with power.

Jesus passing through Capernaum for the last time allowed Himself to be detained. It was the town of His adoption, and He accepted His liabilities there as a citizen. Those who took the tribute tax came to Peter to know whether his teacher did not pay it. Peter said that he did. Coming into the house Jesus asked him whether kings took tribute from their sons or from strangers. Peter said, From strangers. Jesus replied that then the sons were free. But not wishing to cause any difficulty, He told Peter to go and pay sufficient for them both.

While in the house Jesus asked His disciples what they had been disputing by the way. They had been quarrelling about who should be greatest in the Kingdom of heaven. Jesus' question made them feel half-ashamed, and they were silent. But Jesus took a child, and placing him in the midst, said that they would not even enter into the Kingdom unless they were so far changed as to become as guileless as little children. A loving discernment of children is the sign of a simple and child-like nature ; and therefore Jesus could add that anyone who welcomed such a child welcomed Him, and not only Him but God. Let them take constant care to do or say nothing that should lead a child astray. It would be better for a man to be cast into the deep sea with a great millstone tied round his neck than commit such a hideous offence.

The world is full of traps and snares, and must be so, but that is no excuse for setting them. If the hand or foot or eye were a cause of stumbling, it is better to discard them and enter mutilated into life than that the whole body should be cast into Gehenna, where the worm never dies and the fire is quenchless. Into the fiery judgment to come everyone

should enter. The fire would preserve like salt what was sound, and the rest would be consumed.

Therefore let them have salt in themselves, and live at peace with each other.

Reverting to the child, He warned them against regarding lightly the little ones, for in heaven each had its angel who lived in the immediate presence of God. The Son of Man came to seek for the little stray lambs. They rejoiced greatly in recovering a lost sheep ; but the Father had an infinite care for the lambs.

Jesus' word about welcoming a little child being tantamount to welcoming God set John thinking. He recalled a case where he had met an exorcist who used the name of Jesus in his formula of exorcism; and he had forbidden him, since he was not willing to go with the disciples. Jesus, would not allow such bigotry. No one working by the name of Jesus could possibly speak evil of Him ; and if a man is not against Jesus and His disciples, he is on their side. Jesus, in spite of the frequent dullness of His disciples, did not hesitate to identify Himself with them. Even a cup of cold water given in His name wins its reward.

Jesus now repeated to all the disciples what He had said to Peter. Peter could no longer think that he had exclusive charge of the keys of the Kingdom by divine right, since to the eleven also was given authority to bind and loose. He put the emphasis on the body rather than on the individual ; and not only did authority to bind and loose reside in the body of His disciples as a whole, but He applied the same principle to prayer, and added that whenever even two agreed on earth touching what they should ask in prayer, the answer would certainly come from God in heaven. Thus there was a linking of earth and heaven ; heaven giving eternal significance to what is done faithfully on earth. Gatherings together have an infinite value, for the spirit engendered is always greater than the whole. Jesus explained that He Himself was that transcendent presence.

Jesus thought that it was so much more important that men should be brotherly, merciful, and forgiving to one another than that they should be ousting one another in their ambition for high places. No one who asked for forgiveness was to be refused. It might happen that the offender refused to acknowledge his fault even after private and public expostulation, and then fellowship would be impossible, and he might

be excommunicated ; but so long as he repented he was to be forgiven.

Peter seemed to think that there was a limit to forgiving a sinning brother, but Jesus told him there was to be no limit whatever.

It is just here that religion and art meet. The religious duty of forgiving becomes an imperious necessity to the man of imagination, who by his power to put himself into the skin of another knows that he cannot condemn another without condemning himself.

Jesus enforced the lesson by a parable of a lord who forgave his servant a great debt, and the servant's refusal to forgive a fellow servant a small debt, and how the lord delivered him to his tormentors until he should pay the last farthing.

Jesus concluded by declaring that the heavenly Father could not release from bondage the man who refused to forgive his brother.

## XII

Leaving Capernaum Jesus travelled towards Samaria, and intended to pass through it ; but the churlish Samaritans refused, and so angered James and John that they, remembering how Elijah had called down fire from heaven on his adversaries, begged Jesus to do the same. He rebuked them for their want of understanding : they should have known Him well enough by now to know that His mission was not to destroy men but to save them.

The action of the Samaritans forced Him to cross over the Jordan, and continue His journey on the other side. They were not alone, for great multitudes followed Him, and there was a company of Pharisees intently watching for an opportunity to entangle Him in His words.

Having heard Him speak against divorce they came to Him with the seemingly simple question whether it was lawful for a man to put away his wife. Jesus asked them what Moses had said. They reminded Him that Moses had permitted a man to give his wife a bond of divorce and send her out of the house.

The trap was cleverly set, for Jesus, at first unconsciously and contrary to His intention, and later consciously, had departed from Moses ; and not only Himself but the Pharisees knew it. There was nothing for Him but to make a bold statement

and accept the consequences. He told them that Moses had written thus because of the hardness of their hearts, but that in the beginning God had created man and woman, who forsaking parents were to cleave to each other since they two become one flesh. This intimate union is God's making and no man has the right to disrupt it. He added that the man who divorces his wife and marries another is an adulterer, and so is the man who marries a woman who has been divorced.

These words made Jesus' breach with the Pharisees complete. Moses was a prophet whose divine authority was acknowledged by all: Jesus by boldly putting Moses aside had palpably condemned Himself and shown irrefutably that He was an impostor who was misleading the people.

Afterwards in an inn where Jesus and His disciples broke their journey, they brought up again the subject of marriage. It struck them that if a man could never divorce his wife for whatever cause, it would be better not to marry at all. But Jesus said that there are some men who cannot live a celibate life, that it is possible only for those who receive the gift of celibacy from God, though there are other causes at work. Some are congenitally incapable of marriage; some are made eunuchs for human purposes; some castrate themselves that they may devote themselves wholly to the service of the Kingdom. Only let him who is called to the celibate life see that he remains in his calling.

When Jesus finished speaking about marriage, by a curious coincidence, little children were brought to Him by their mothers that He might lay His hands on them. The disciples rebuked the mothers, but Jesus, very indignant with them, said: Let the little children come unto me, and do not forbid them; for of such is the Kingdom of heaven. I tell you truly that whoever does not receive the Kingdom as a little child shall certainly not enter into it. Then taking the children in His arms, He laid His hands on them and blessed them.

Jesus resumed His journey, followed by the crowds. Here and there one out of the crowd, by a sudden impulse, declared his willingness to become a whole follower of Jesus. But He said that the foxes have holes, and the birds nests, but the Son of Man had nowhere to lay His head. Another stipulated that he should go home first and say good-bye to his people. To which Jesus merely commented that no man having put his

hand to the plough and looking back was fit for the Kingdom of heaven.

In one case He gave the call to discipleship. But the man begged leave first to bury his father. Jesus replied, Let the dead bury their dead, and do you go and preach the Kingdom of heaven.

Another came running to Him who was very rich and asked Him what good thing he should do to inherit eternal life. Jesus referred him to the commandments, which he then professed to have observed all his life. Jesus' interest was aroused, and He watched him as He proposed the crucial test that he should sell his possessions, distribute to the poor, and then come and follow. That was too much, and the rich young man turned sadly away.

Jesus looking towards His disciples remarked how hard it was for rich people to enter into the Kingdom. Seeing their astonishment, He repeated how hard it was for those who trusted in riches to enter into the Kingdom. Still more astonished they demanded how a man was to live if he gave away all his money. Jesus said that, humanly speaking, it was impossible; but not for those called by God, with Whom all things were possible.

They might have known that, since Jesus and they were living lives of poverty without want.

Peter, thinking of their condition, and not above expecting a heavenly reward, said that they had left everything to follow Him. To which Jesus replied that those who detached themselves from everything for His sake and the Gospel's received even already more than they had renounced—fathers, mothers, brothers, sisters, houses by the way; and in the future on the new earth, when the Son of Man should sit on the throne of glory, they should not only inherit eternal life, but sit on twelve thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel.

And lest the prospect of thrones should set them wrangling again for pre-eminence He added: But many that are first shall be last and the last first.

This last point was of such importance that He enforced it by a parable of a householder who owned a vineyard and sent his bailiff to procure labourers to work the vineyard. At the end of the day each labourer received exactly the same wage, even if he had come in only at the eleventh hour.

The parable has been pronounced difficult The difficulty

has lain in man's unwillingness to recognise the fact, which is patent in every age, that man is not and cannot be paid in exact proportion to the value of his work. For man's work has no money equivalent, and there would be no injustice, even if all were paid alike.

As Jesus came nearer to Jerusalem the thought of the destiny that awaited Him there surged up in His mind. He was walking in front of His disciples, but feeling that He must again make an effort to prepare them, He called them to Him and told them how He, the Son of Man, must be delivered into the hands of the chief priests and scribes and finally Gentiles; that they would mock Him and condemn Him to death, but He should rise again.

The disciples' thoughts had reverted to the 'heavenly thrones,' to which they had given the most literal interpretation. Jesus' words about condemnation and death appeared to them entirely irrelevant. James and John, almost before He had finished speaking, burst in with the bold request that they might sit one on His right hand, the other on His left hand in His glory. Jesus, mindful that His own way to the throne of glory was by drinking the bitter cup of suffering and death, asked them whether they were willing to drink the same cup, and be baptised with the same fiery baptism as Himself. Without realising to what they were assenting they answered that they were. Jesus said that they should indeed drink of His cup and be baptised with His Baptism, but the coveted places on His right and left hand were not His to give, but should be given to those for whom God prepared them.

The other disciples were much displeased at the forwardness of James and John. Jesus pointed out to them that Gentile rulers exercised lordship and authority over their subjects; but it was not to be so among them; those who wished to be great and chief would be ministers and servants. For even the Son of Man came not to be ministered to, but to minister and give His life a ransom for the elect of all peoples.

When He came to Jericho he was accosted as Son of David by a blind man named Bartimaeus, who sat by the highway begging. Jesus called him to Him and asked what He wanted. With no hesitation he answered that he might receive his sight. Jesus told him to move on, for his faith had saved him, and he at once with recovered sight joined the throng that followed Jesus.

## XIII

Jesus arrived at a village called Bethany, where lived a little family consisting of Mary, Martha, and Lazarus. They offered Him hospitality which He gladly accepted, and the three quickly became His friends. The busy bustling Martha and the quiet unobtrusive Mary alike appealed to Him : He was only anxious that they should appreciate each other, and at a sign of captiousness from the more efficient Martha, He pointed out that the one thing that was needful had in no wise been missed by Mary.

The next day Jesus made careful plans for His entry into Jerusalem. His mind was steeped in the sacramental value of words and acts, and He intended that His entry into His own city should be at once dramatic and in line with Messianic prophecy. The vast crowds pouring into Jerusalem for the Passover would not understand the significance of His action any more than the Galileans had understood His parables ; but as then so now it was possible that a humble soul here and there, taught by God, might see and understand.

Jesus sent two of His disciples into a neighbouring village to procure for Him a colt. When they returned with one, they made an impromptu saddle out of their clothes, and helped Jesus to mount. In this way Jesus entered into Jerusalem meekly riding upon an ass. His own disciples, aware of the meaning of His act, were filled with enthusiasm, and running ahead they spread more clothes in the way, and cut down palm branches, waving and spreading them as they shouted : God bless Him, God bless Him. The seething crowd catching fire, took up the cry, God bless Him : Blessed is He that cometh in the name of the Lord The inhabitants of Jerusalem, surprised at the pageant, came out of their houses, and amidst the cries of the excited people, their eager voices were heard asking : Who is this ? Who is this ? To which the multitude answered : This is Jesus the prophet of Nazareth of Galilee.

Jesus passed straight to the temple and spent some time looking around at everything in the sacred building. Then, as it was evening and He must find a lodging, He remembered His new friends at Bethany, and decided to go to them and ask for a bed

The next day coming from Bethany He suddenly felt

hungry, and seeing a fig-tree went to see if it had any figs, and was disappointed to find nothing but leaves. Being entirely preoccupied with the symbolism of acts, and His disciples being with Him, He put forth the strange power that resided in His spirit, and of which He never lost consciousness, and cursed the fig-tree. And His disciples heard it.

Arriving in Jerusalem Jesus went straight to the temple, where He found a busy traffic proceeding briskly. Filled with indignation He overturned the tables of the money-changers, and the seats of those who sold doves for the temple sacrifices ; forbade all vessels to be carried through the temple, and flung at the astonished crowd the words of Isaiah, that God's house should be called the house of prayer, but you, He added with scorn, have made it a den of thieves.

In the midst of the excitement, men who were lame and blind found their way into the temple and came to Jesus. As of old He was filled with pity, and His hidden power, which was manifested in cursing the fig-tree and confounding the temple swindlers, He now put forth in a happier cause, and He healed the afflicted. As accompaniment to the deeds of mercy were heard the sweet voices of the temple children, who had caught up the cry of the multitude, and were repeating in their treble voices, God bless the Son of David !

Meanwhile the chief priests and scribes were angrily observing Him, but felt impotent in the face of the enthusiastic crowd. Eagerly they caught at trifles, and irritated at the children, drew Jesus' attention to them, thinking He would silence them ; but Jesus reminded them from a psalm that it was out of the mouths of little children and unweaned babes that God had perfected praise.

Jesus again retired to Bethany. The next day, when He and His disciples were passing the cursed fig-tree, Peter noticed to his astonishment that it was dried up, and he called Jesus' attention to it. Jesus took the opportunity to give His disciples a lesson in faith and prayer.

He had earlier in His ministry given a form of prayer which was remarkable for its brief simplicity. He had noticed how the Gentiles prayed without understanding like babblers ;[1] but that was not the only mistake. Jews as well as Gentiles spent their lives in asking God for things and never taking them. To ask is only one part of prayer—the more important is to take. The one who asks and takes prays both briefly and

[1] Matt. vi. 7. Greek: *βαττολογέω*.

effectually. The taking faculty of the soul is faith. Even God effected His purposes by faith. God speaks and it is done, just because He speaks in faith. With the faithful intention word and deed become one. Men regarding God's words as the Creator's would hardly presume to think of doing the same ; but Jesus did not hesitate to tell His disciples that they might have God's faith. Let them give their word in faith, and even mountains would move into the sea at their command. Man can create besides God ; and once he has grasped this truth, he has learnt also the real meaning of prayer Therefore when people know what things they really want, let them believe that they have already received them while they are praying, and they shall have them. There is only one thing besides lack of faith that makes prayer ineffectual, and that is an unforgiving spirit. When praying see that all hard feelings of unforgiveness were banished, otherwise even God Himself was impotent to loose the bond of the unforgiving soul.

Jesus went to the temple again to teach, and was accosted by the chief priests, scribes, and elders, who had been turning over in their minds His action in cleansing the temple. They asked Him by what authority He did these things. Jesus held that there are some men like Melchisedec who receive authority by their direct call from God. John the Baptist was such a one. He had taken upon himself to baptise because he believed that God had called him. This belief was shared by the people and a few of the hierarchy. So Jesus asked them whether John's authority was from men or from God. They would not say from God, for Jesus would ask why they did not believe in Him ; and they were afraid to say from men, because they feared the people who had kept their faith that John was a prophet, so they answered that they could not tell. And so Jesus refused to enlighten them further about His own authority.

The Pharisaic party had now challenged Jesus, and He, judging the time ripe, took up the challenge, and, facing His enemies, gave His whole attention to them.

His initial offence had been some time back in Galilee, when He took His meals with prostitutes and thieves. It was a simple fact which He fully recognised that He preferred exuberant sinners to anaemic saints ; and now in His final conflict with the Pharisees and hierarchy He took His stand as the advocate of sinners against those who claimed an

authority that He had no wish to deny. In a series of parables He embodied His deepest thoughts of the relative values of sinners and Pharisees. A man had two sons. To the first he said : My son, go and work to-day in my vineyard. He answered : I can't ; but afterwards he repented and went. The other son to the same command said : All right, I will ; and never went. Jesus boldly interpreted His parable. John had proclaimed the Kingdom of God. They had refused him : the prostitutes and thieves had repented and helped John to prepare for the Kingdom.

A man had a hundred sheep, and lost one. Through fearful difficulties he found the lost sheep, and felt for it a peculiar affection and joy that he could not feel for the ninety-nine that never went astray.

Again, a man had two sons. One went away ; got into bad company ; squandered his allowance, and was reduced to feeding swine. The other stayed at home. The father's heart went after his lost son, and when in the distance he saw him returning, he ran and embraced him joyfully, and drawing him home made him a feast to celebrate his recovery. Meanwhile the other brother sulked and refused to join in the feast, and would only come in at the command of his father.

Jesus threw a still more daring parable at the heads of the priestly party. A man planted a vineyard, and having provided all that was necessary for it, including vine-dressers, went into a far country. Every harvest he sent a servant that he might receive some of the fruits. But they ill-treated the servants, even stoning them. Last of all he sent his much loved and only son, saying, they would reverence his son. But they said : This is the heir, come and let us kill him, and the inheritance shall be ours. And they took him and killed him, and cast him out of the vineyard. What shall therefore the lord of the vineyard do ? He will come and destroy the vine-dressers and give the vineyard to others.

Here with marvellous fullness Jesus embodied His thoughts of the Kingdom, of Himself, and of His original attitude towards sinners. The Kingdom in the Old Testament was entrusted to the priesthood, and so far as the everlasting invisible Kingdom could be made visible it was so in the Jewish Church. God had sent His servants the prophets from time to time, who were invariably ill-treated by ecclesiastical authority ; and last of all He sent His dearly loved Son—His anointed Jesus—and Him they would kill and cast out But this same Jesus had found

that thieves and prostitutes repented and entered the Kingdom, while priests and Pharisees remained without, and He declared that the Kingdom should be given to those who entered it, and taken from those who had held it by divine authority. Later, when the Gentiles began to enter the Kingdom and Jerusalem was destroyed, the antithesis in the parable was interpreted as also applying to Jew and Gentile ; but Jesus had first in His mind priestly Pharisee and sinner ; and the priests did not misunderstand Him. When He added that the stone which the builders refused should become the corner-stone, and that the Lord Himself should perform this, they recognised themselves and the implicit claim that Jesus made for Himself, and they were filled with anger, and would have taken forcible hold of Him had they not feared the people

## XIV

The chief priests retired to concert their plans to take Jesus, and He soon found Himself in His final conflict with the Pharisees and Herodians. It happened thus. Sinners were attracted to Him as they had been in Galilee ; and Jesus, though in the holy city, boldly received them and accepted their invitation to meals, which provoked the usual comment from the Pharisees and scribes. Jesus gathering Himself together launched at them scathing parables to show them how inveterately they looked at the surface of things, while God looked at the heart. They were marvellously successful in throwing dust in each other's eyes, but they should not escape the searching judgment of God.

A rich man had an agent who had wasted his property, and he dismissed him. The agent, unable to dig and ashamed to beg, resolved on a plan. Calling his lord's debtors he greatly reduced their bills, and thus won their friendship and their hearths. And his lord, admiring his cleverness, could not help commending him.

As Jesus uttered His parable and looked round on the scowling Pharisees, His voice rose, and with a fine edge of irony He cried : Go on and make friends by means of your tainted riches. You will need the prayers of the poor when you die, if ever you are to be received into the everlasting habitations.[1]

Jesus enlarged on the necessity of being faithful in small

[1] Luke xvi. 1–13.

things. The Pharisees were not even faithful in the use of their riches. How could God entrust them with the true riches of the Kingdom? He concluded with a brief pithy sentence: Ye cannot serve God and Mammon.

The money-loving Pharisees understood, and jeered Him. Jesus proceeded with another money parable.

A rich man lived luxuriously, and a poor man sat at his gate in rags, and the dogs licked his sores. Both died. The rich man went to Hades, the poor man to Abraham's bosom. The rich man in torment saw Lazarus afar off, and he cried to Abraham to send Lazarus to touch his tongue with one drop of cold water. And Abraham, pointing to the great gulf fixed between them, said it was impossible. The rich man, seeing his case was hopeless, begged that some one might be sent to warn his five brethren. But Abraham said if they would not hear Moses and the prophets, they would not listen even to one who rose from the dead.[1]

The Pharisees, unable to rebut His parables, tried to entangle Him by asking difficult questions. Should they pay tribute to Caesar? Jesus, penniless, borrowed a penny with the head of Caesar and a superscription stamped on it, and asked whose they were. On being told they were Caesar's, He replied: To Caesar Caesar's, to God God's.

While the Pharisees were huffed, the Sadducees came forward. Jesus had not come into so much conflict with them as with the Pharisees. The Sadducees were less jealous of Him since they were not themselves popular. They guarded their self-respect by extending their culture, and, like many a Roman Catholic priest of to-day, while uncompromising on dogma, were well acquainted with the thoughts and speculations of other people and other nations. Their culture tended to make them rationalists.

They proposed to Jesus an absurd case of seven brothers who married the same woman and died in quick succession; and then with an air of check asked whose wife she should be in the resurrection.

Jesus answered that in the resurrection marriage would be superseded, and that men would live like the angels; and while on the question of resurrection He reminded them from the Scriptures that Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob could scarcely be dead, otherwise God could not speak of Himself in the present as their God.

[1] Luke xvi. 19–31.

Taking this with other utterances of Jesus, it is clear that He regarded bodily death as the beginning of the resurrection that was to be completed when He came again in glory.

A scribe, appreciating Jesus' answers, asked Him which was the great commandment. He answered : Hear, O Israel, The Lord our God is One : and thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength : this is the first commandment. And the second is like, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. The scribe admitted the truth of Jesus' words, and added how much better was such a life of love than burnt-offerings and sacrifices. Jesus commended his discreet remarks and assured him he was not far from the Kingdom.

Jesus had seized the permanent element in the law. In the coming Kingdom, where there would be no marriage, and all would be children of the resurrection, some even of His own ethical teaching would pass, giving place to the Law of Love which is beyond good and evil. One sees here how marvellously Jesus distinguished between the relative and abiding element in morality. His attitude to the law and the prophets was, after His breach, finally determined. They should vanish because they should be fulfilled in the Kingdom of God.

Jesus put one question in return to the many that were asked Him. He was again in the temple. He asked how the scribes explained that the Messiah was the son of David, since David in a psalm called Him both Son and Lord. This silenced the scribes, and He turned to the people, who listened to Him gladly. Knowing that His struggle with the Pharisees and scribes had already reached its crisis, He did not scruple to warn the people of their spiritual guides. Truly they sat in Moses' seat, but they never thought of doing what they commanded others to do. They bound burdens on tired backs, and refused to touch them with their little finger. To make a show, to occupy the seat of honour, to be greeted Master, Master, as they strolled in the market-place, these were the things that were like sweet incense to them.

Then with a sudden rush of white-heat anger He turned on the Pharisees and poured out a torrent of invective and abuse : Woe to you scribes, Pharisees, hypocrites ! You shut out of the Kingdom yourselves and those who would enter. You prey upon widows' houses and then make long prayers. You compass land and sea to make a proselyte and he becomes

worse than yourselves. Fools and blind ! Even at the altar you are casuists. You are punctilious in tithes, and omit judgment and mercy and faith. Blind guides ! who make a mountain out of a mole-hill. You make the outside clean and leave the inside filthy. And yourselves too are like white sepulchres, beautiful without, full of dead bones and all uncleanness within. Woe to you scribes, Pharisees, hypocrites! You build handsome tombs for the prophets, and spare no expense in adorning them ; but when one comes your way, you kill him. Complete your fathers' measure. You serpents, vipers ! How can you escape the damnation of hell ? You will continue to kill and crucify prophets and seers and poets, that upon you may come all the righteous blood that has been shed upon the earth. You will fill the cup of iniquity and bring all things to a consummation in this generation.

Jesus' wrath was spent ; then turning to Jerusalem, with infinite pathos He lamented over her. How often would He have gathered her children together just like a hen gathers her chickens under her wings, and she would not! Alas! she would be left desolate, because she knew not the time of her visitation.

As Jesus passed the treasury He noticed a poor woman casting in her last farthing, and He assured His disciples that her offering was of more value in the sight of God than all the offerings made by the rich.

## XV

Passing out of the temple, one of His disciples drew His attention to the building and its stones. Jesus knowing according to prophecy that the temple, which was the visible symbol of the Kingdom, must be destroyed before the Kingdom could be manifested, assured him that there would not be left one stone upon another that should not be thrown down.

The party passed out to the mount of Olives ; and when they sat down, Peter, James, John, and Andrew asked Him privately when these things should be fulfilled.

He answered that the destruction of Jerusalem and the desecration of the temple should be the beginning of a time of tribulation and temptation such as the world had never yet seen. That not even the elect would survive were it not that God for their sakes had shortened the days of the tribulation. False Christs would arise wielding magic powers which would

seduce, if possible, even the elect. The tribulation would be followed by portents in the sun, moon, and stars, and then should appear the Son of Man, coming in the clouds with great power and glory. When these things begin to happen, then the end is near. For most truly that generation would not pass till all was fulfilled. Heaven and earth would pass sooner than His words.

But though the end was near, He could not tell them the day or the hour, for God had reserved that knowledge to Himself, and therefore they must watch lest the Day come upon them unawares. He was as a man taking a far journey, who left his house, gave authority to his servants, and to every man his work, and commanded the porter to watch.

They were His servants to whom He gave varying talents, according to the ability of each one ; to one five, to another two, and to another one. Let them double their talents in His absence, or that which He had given should be taken away from them. To impress on them the need to be ready and watchful, He gave them a parable of ten virgins, five wise and five foolish. The wise took oil in their vessels for their lamps, the foolish took none. At midnight, when there was a cry that the bridegroom had come, the wise went forth to meet him ; but the foolish, going to buy oil, came back and found the door was closed.[1]

His coming would inaugurate the day of judgment. Seated on His throne of glory He should judge the nations gathered before Him. According as they had treated His brothers they should be placed as sheep on His right hand or goats on His left. The sheep should inherit the Kingdom ; the goats should be cast into everlasting fire along with Satan and his angels.[2]

And therefore let them be ready, and alert, their lights burning. Not careless, and carousing, and beating fellow servants, but giving to each one his portion of food. Such was a wise servant whom his lord at his return would make ruler over all that he had. But the wicked, drunken servant should be cut off and given his portion with hypocrites, where should be weeping and gnashing of teeth. Peter asked whether Jesus addressed these words to all or only to those to whom He had entrusted the keys of the Kingdom. Jesus by an indirect answer made it plain that His apostles were the servants to whom He had given authority. He had taken the Kingdom

[1] Matt. xxv. 1–12. [2] Matt. xxv. 31–46.

from the priests and entrusted it to them. Their responsibility was heavy, but that made it all the more necessary that they should watch, and be ready to give an account of their work at His return. Though their responsibility was great, their reward would be great also, for they should sit on twelve thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel.

## XVI

After two days would be the feast of the Passover, and the chief priests and scribes were deliberating how they might take Jesus and put Him to death without creating an uproar among the people on the feast day.

In the meanwhile Jesus returned to Bethany, and while in the house of Simon the leper, a woman came, and poured the contents of an alabaster box of precious ointment on His head. Some of those present were indignant, and suddenly developing a concern for the poor asked why the ointment had not been first sold, and the proceeds given to them. Jesus reminded them that there was always the opportunity of serving the poor, but not Him, as He should not always be with them ; and He declared that the woman's deed should be remembered wherever the gospel was preached.

While Jesus was in Bethany, Judas slipped off to the chief priests. He held valuable information about Jesus for which they would gladly give him money. Having bargained for a sum, he came away to seek a convenient opportunity to betray Jesus into their hands.

Jesus intended to keep the Passover, and for this purpose sent two of His disciples into Jerusalem to prepare the guest-room where He might eat the Passover with His disciples.

In the evening He came with the twelve, and they sat down to the meal. Jesus having divined Judas' treachery felt depressed, and He suddenly declared that one of those present eating with Him would betray Him. The disciples were amazed, and each asked, Is it I ? Jesus only replied that it was one who was dipping his fingers into the dish with Him. But Judas, unable to keep silent, also asked, Is it I ? And Jesus assented. The Son of Man was going the predestined way as was written of Him, but that did not exculpate the traitor. Good were it for him if he had never been born.

Then Jesus transformed the supper into a sacramental meal. Already He had given bread to the Galilean multi-

tude as a pledge and token that they should eat bread in the Kingdom. Now He repeated the sacrament, but identified the broken bread with His body and the poured out wine with His blood, saying, Take, eat ; This is my body. . . . This is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many. I tell you truly that I will drink no more wine, until that day that I drink it new in the Kingdom of God.

As the disciples ate the consecrated bread and drank the consecrated wine, they knew by these tokens of their Master's death that they should eat and drink with Him in the Messianic Kingdom, and that with such food they should never hunger and thirst again

## XVII

When they had sung an hymn they went out to the mount of Olives. Then Jesus told His disciples that on that very night the shepherd should be smitten and they like sheep scattered. Whereupon Peter protested that, whatever the others might do, he would be faithful. Jesus, knowing his disciple only too well, repeated sadly that before dawn he would deny Him. Peter more vehemently protested : If I should die with Thee, nothing will make me deny Thee And so they all said.

They came to a place called Gethsemane. And Jesus telling His disciples to sit down, took apart with Him Peter, James, and John, and began to be sadly perplexed and sore troubled, and looking to them for sympathy told them that His soul was more sorrowful than He could bear, even unto death ; but let them stay there and watch. And He went forward a little way and fell on the ground and prayed : Father, all things are possible unto Thee ; take away this cup from me ; nevertheless not as I will, but what Thou wilt. Then He went to His disciples and found them asleep. Sadly he addressed Himself to Peter, Could he not watch even one hour ? He should watch and pray lest he enter into the temptation. But He knew the willingness of the spirit, the weakness of the flesh. He went away and prayed again. And being in agony His sweat was like drops of blood. Three times He came to them, and three times they were asleep. Ah, sleep on and rest, He said with compassionate irony, What does it matter ? The time is fulfilled, and the Son of Man is betrayed into the hands of sinners.

While He was speaking Judas came with a great multitude, armed with swords and sticks, sent by the priests and scribes. According to a pre-arranged sign he came up to Jesus, and kissing Him said : Teacher, Teacher. Instantly the multitude laid hands on Him and took Him. One of the disciples, remembering perhaps his profession of faithfulness, took his sword and cut off the ear of the servant of the high priest.

Jesus, noticing the swords and sticks, asked them whether they had come to catch a thief. Why had they not taken Him while He was teaching them in the temple ?

But why ask any questions ? His destiny was unfolding according to the scriptures, and He would offer no resistance. The disciples at the sight of so many swords turned on their heels and fled.

Jesus was taken at once to the high priest, with whom were assembled the chief priests, elders, and scribes. It was night, and they wished to get the trial over as quietly and quickly as possible before the people were astir. Witnesses were hastily procured and called upon to make their accusation. But their witness was confused and contradictory. Jesus had said something about destroying the temple, and building it again, but no one could remember His exact words. Jesus remained silent ; then the chief priest arose and asked Him if He had nothing to say. Still He answered nothing. Time was flying, there must be no more delay. The chief priest had one piece of damning information from Judas, but there was no second witness Would Jesus confess Himself ? He put the question : Art Thou the Christ, *the Son of the Blessed?* Jesus said : I am ; and ye shall see the Son of Man sitting on the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven.

That was enough. The chief priest, with a triumphant gleam in his eye, rending his garment, cried : What need have we of any further witnesses ? You have heard the blasphemy ; what is your opinion ? And they all gave their verdict that He was guilty of death. Then their pent up hatred found foul vent. They spat at Him, and covering His face hustled Him, and insolently jeered : Prophesy ! while the servants struck Him with their hands.

In the meanwhile Peter, who had at first fled, retraced his steps and had come even to the high priest's palace, and sitting down with the servants began to warm his hands at the fire. One of the maid-servants seeing him accused him of having been with Jesus of Nazareth. He denied that he even knew

what she was talking about, and shifted his position to the porch. Again the maid seeing him, said to the others standing by : This is one of them. He denied it again. Presently several together said to him that surely he was one of them for he had a Galilean accent. Then he swore and cursed angrily, and declared emphatically : I know not the man of whom ye are speaking. Just then a cock crew. And Peter, remembering what Jesus had said to him overnight, went out and wept bitterly.

## XVIII

In the morning the chief priests held a consultation with the elders and scribes and the whole council. The power of life and death was not in their hands, but in those of the Roman Governor, Pontius Pilate. They fully realised that Pilate would care nothing for a charge of blasphemy against Jesus, and that they must find some other charge that would stir him to action. The Messianic claim, they knew, involved the claim to kingship ; that, taken with a free account of what He had said about Caesar and tribute, could be made sufficient ; and accordingly, when they led Jesus to Pilate, they made the accusation, difficult to refute, that He claimed to be the real King of the Jews.

To Pilate's direct question whether He was the King of the Jews, He assented without explaining the meaning He attached to the words. But to a string of false accusations thrown out by the chief priests He answered nothing at all, till even Pilate wondered at His making no self-defence.

It was the custom at the feast for the Roman Governor to release a prisoner. The multitude was about to ask that Jesus might be released ; but the chief priests, alive to such a contingency, ran down among the people, telling them that their pet prophet and Messiah had blasphemously claimed to be equal to God. They, horrified, were ready to acquiesce in the priests' suggestion that they should ask for Jesus Barabbas and not Jesus Christ. (This Barabbas was in prison for causing a mob, and for murder.)

Pilate, desiring to release Jesus, and thinking that they were on His side, asked them whether he should release the King of the Jews ? He was surprised that that was not their wish. What then, he asked, should he do to Him whom they called the King of the Jews ? They shouted : Crucify Him ! And

when Pilate asked them what evil He had done, they only shouted the more uproariously : Crucify Him !

So Pilate released Barabbas to please the people, and delivered Jesus, after scourging Him, to be crucified. The soldiers led Jesus into the court which is the Praetorium, and calling together the whole cohort, put on Him an imperial purple robe, and a crown of thorns, and saluted Him, saying : Hail, King of the Jews ! Then, striking Him on the head and spitting on Him, they bowed low to Him in mockery.

Growing tired of their mockery, they took off the royal garments, and put on Him His own, and led Him out to crucify Him. Jesus was exhausted after His mental agony of the preceding evening and the long, cold, sleepless night on which had followed the scourging of His naked body, and was unable to bear the weight of the heavy cross. They, impatient of delay, seized hold of the first sturdy man, and made him carry the cross for Jesus.

When they came to the place called Golgotha, there they crucified Him between two thieves, and offered Him a little wine mixed with myrrh, which He refused. At the foot of the cross they cast lots for His rough cheap garments, while over the cross was inscribed the claim that had given such mortal offence : THE KING OF THE JEWS.

This was at nine o'clock. Jesus remained clearly conscious for the next six hours, during which time He lived intensely, while His whole ministry and each part stood out sharply defined in His memory. From the beginning it had been marked by conflict, often bitter, against the Pharisees. They were the spirit of religion, narrow, hard, bigoted, and cruel. He in the name of the Kingdom and the spirit of life had thrown His full strength against them, and in His last public encounter had denounced them in terrible words of fire which had quickly burnt into their arid spirits, and given them their final impetus to rush Him to His death. The end of the conflict had come, and they had conquered. But on the cross the mind and spirit of Jesus were marvellously clear. By a sudden impulse He set aside the long traditional morality by which He could still have defended His mode of warfare. His imagination seized their point of view. In that moment all anger and resentment against them died, and as He murmured : Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do, the victory was snatched from their hands and given to Him for ever.

While His spirit was triumphing, men beneath with gross wit were mocking and railing at Him: Ah! thou that destroyest the temple, and buildest it in three days, save thyself, and come down from the cross. The chief priests exchanged significant glances with the scribes, adding their disdainful words: He saved others; how is it He cannot save Himself? Let Christ the King of Israel come down now from the cross, that we may see and believe.

The thieves who were crucified with Him joined in the reproaches. But one of them was arrested suddenly by what he saw. He had before heard the gospel of the coming Kingdom, and turning to Jesus said: Lord, remember me when Thou comest in Thy Kingdom. Jesus' word came quickly: To-day shalt thou be with Me in Paradise.

At three o'clock the soul of Jesus sank into a horror of great darkness. His faith in His Messianic calling, always difficult, had been helped by the faith of His disciples. Now they had forsaken Him, and He was left alone against the world, which was casting His claim in His teeth with scornful unbelief. What if they were right and He was wrong? What if His ministry from the beginning was the outcome of complete illusion, and this was the end of His ghastly failure? Tortured in body, He could not disentangle the illusory element in His message, and, sinking into darkness, He cried with a loud voice: My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken me?

Some of them that stood by interpreted His words as a cry for Elijah. One of them ran, and filling a sponge with vinegar, attached it to a rod, and offered it to Him to sip. But Jesus gave a loud cry, then His head dropped, and His Spirit passed away.

# PART II

## CHAPTER V

### NEW TESTAMENT WITNESS TO JESUS

### I

The foregoing account of Jesus is constructed mainly from St Mark, with supplemental touches from St Matthew and St Luke. The three Evangelists formed the synoptic witness to Jesus, and they all three wrote before the destruction of Jerusalem. Each is concerned with a single aspect of the Person and work of Christ, and each suggests a greater Jesus than he portrays.

St Matthew presents Jesus in relation to Israel. He is the real King of the Jews, the son of David, come to offer Himself and His Kingdom to His ancient people. He is called Jesus because He shall save them from their sins. His royal pedigree is given through His mother's husband, for He is King of Israel by legal right as well as by His intrinsic nature. The Evangelist then traces the King through every step of His progress, till the awful moment when Israel has rejected her King and nailed Him in derision to the cross. Yet the offer of the Kingdom is not withdrawn. Christ rises again, gives His apostles a commission to make disciples of all nations, that when Israel repents, acknowledges her King, and receives the Kingdom, then the Gentile disciples also may come and sit down with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob in the Kingdom of the Messiah.

It was necessary for his purpose that St Matthew should set Jesus in the framework of Jewish prophecy. By prophecy he understood a verbal prediction of the events of Jesus' life, from His birth to His death. In his narrative he winds up each episode by saying 'that it might be fulfilled which was

spoken by the prophet.' Some of the prophecies are meaningless unless understood literally, such as, Out of thee shall come a governor that shall rule my people Israel. The Evangelist never saw Jesus Christ ruling Israel, but he has no doubt that when the nations are evangelised, then the ancient word of the prophet Micah will be fulfilled to the letter. There are other passages that he quotes from the Old Testament which are much more tortuous. When Herod sent forth and slew all the children that were in Bethlehem, from two years old and under, the Evangelist adds, Then was fulfilled that which was spoken by Jeremy the prophet, saying, In Rama was there a voice heard, lamentation, and weeping, and great mourning, Rachel weeping for her children, and would not be comforted, because they are not. A reference to Jeremiah shows that he was not writing of little children at all. He was thinking of Israel's sorrows at the loss of her sons at the hands of her enemies. No doubt Jewish mothers were part of Israel, and their baby boys were sons of Israel ; but such a mode of interpretation, though not unacceptable to those brought up in Jewish circles under Rabbinical influence, does not in the least commend itself to the modern world, or strengthen Matthew's witness to Jesus.

Yet St Matthew gives a true view of Jesus treating the prophets with masterly freedom, as when He told the multitude, and later, His disciples, that John the Baptist was Elijah ; and we see Jesus thinking of Himself not as a machine obeying the mechanical rôle of prediction, but as the Anointed One fulfilling the prophets' vision and re-creating it in the process.

Jesus Himself accepted the title of prophet, and reckoned that His work of preaching the gospel of the Kingdom was a prophet's work until the Kingdom should come, and then He would enter on His Messianic office. There is no sign that He felt called upon to predict the future by His individual foresight. It was not given to the prophets or even to Jesus to know the times or the seasons, that God had kept in His own power ; and we need to remember, when the Evangelists represent Jesus predicting His death, His resurrection, the fall of Jerusalem, and His coming again, that in none of these instances was He even speaking as a prophet. He spoke with certainty of His death, because at the time of the death of John the Baptist His own conflict with the Pharisees had already advanced so far, that He perceived that the same fate was

inevitable for Him, unless He resisted, and He resolved not to resist, but to make His death an offering to God.

He spoke with equal certainty of His resurrection because He shared with John the expectation that the Kingdom must soon come. He believed that His death would bring it speedily. And since it was part of the apocalyptic teaching that at the coming of the Kingdom the faithful dead should rise again, so of necessity He, though put to death, must shortly rise again to enter on His Messianic office in the unveiled Kingdom.

The fall of Jerusalem was to be the prelude to the Last Judgment, and was bound up in the apocalyptic vision with the coming Kingdom.

So we conclude that Jesus drew on no supernatural insight into future events. Because of the vividness of His Messianic consciousness He believed that the Last Day was at hand, but that expectation was ruthlessly set aside by history in the inexorable process of time.

Jesus held that a prophet was one who revealed God's will. He was always right when He trusted Himself: He was mistaken when He set too high a value on the apocalyptic vision of others.

In any case, He never imagined that He was here to put His foot down on the spot precisely marked by prophecy, for before all else He had the thrilling consciousness that He was not an automaton but a live man, and He knew in His inmost spirit that He was, by obedience to the spirit of life, not only creating the future but also re-creating the past.

## II

St Mark presents Jesus not as the King of Israel but as the servant of Jehovah. Israel was called to be the servant and failed. Jesus identifies Himself with Israel, yet fulfils this calling triumphantly. As a servant His pedigree is not given. The prophets had spoken of Israel as dying and rising again and coming to glory. Hence St Mark sees Jesus as the ideal servant dying, rising, and ascending, and as such the human type of Israel's earthly destiny.

St Mark is less concerned than St Matthew with prophecy, but he is enthralled by the miracles. Many ages have felt with him; but to-day we do not feel that miracles, as such, add to the glory of Jesus. We know the vulgar thirst for

marvels which consumes unredeemed man, and we feel that the greatest man will not pander to this lust, but will seek to recommend his message by appealing to what is highest in his hearers. Yet St Mark unexpectedly, by his desire to be truthful, rescues his hero from the thaumaturgists, by giving Jesus' incisive answer to the Pharisees who demanded a sign, There shall no sign be given to this generation. We gather finally that Jesus did many mighty works, but only when moved through His love and pity.

## III

St Luke, except in his beautiful account of the Nativity, scarcely helps at all to construct the history of Jesus. His chronology is subject to his didactic purpose, and he inserts the words of Jesus, which he has industriously gleaned, wherever his narrative leaves a gap. His value as a testimony to the character of Jesus comes from his faithful portrayal of the attitude of Jesus towards the Gentiles. He is as emphatic as St Matthew in insisting on Jesus' primary relation to the Jews, yet not so much as the King of Israel, though he does not overlook the fact, but as the perfect son of man, the flower of Israel, and the hope of the world. He gives His human pedigree through His mother ; and, scrupulous of Jewish law, how the woman's right passes to the husband by marriage, says that Joseph is the son of Mary's father Heli. The two pedigrees of St Matthew and St Luke join in David—Joseph's through Solomon, Mary's through Nathan, both sons of David.

Jesus' mission to Israel is brought out most clearly in the Song of Zacharias. Blessed be the Lord God of Israel ; for He hath visited and redeemed His people, and hath raised up an horn of salvation for us in the house of His servant David . . . that we should be saved from our enemies, and from the hand of all that hate us . . . to remember His holy Covenant ; the oath which He sware to our father Abraham, that He would grant unto us, that we being delivered out of the hand of our enemies might serve Him. . . . That is a purely Jewish national song, of all the more value because St Luke himself is concerned with the Gentiles. He is far removed from St Paul's final teaching concerning the Gentiles as given in the letters to the Ephesians and Colossians. He is in the midst of the early burning hope that Israel would

repent, and through Israel the Gentiles be blessed. Hence St Matthew cares for Israel, but does not overlook the Gentiles; St Luke cares for the Gentiles, but does not overlook Israel. He treasures every word and act of Jesus touching the Gentiles.

In Simeon's song, Jesus is 'a light to lighten the Gentiles.' Jesus in His address at Nazareth makes marked reference to the Gentile Naaman, and to the Gentile widow of Sarepta, in a way that provoked the anger of His hearers.[1] The Roman centurion's faith in Jesus' orderly divine power over disease was sufficient to make him a child of the Kingdom.[2] And with what an unexpected tenderness Jesus refers to old-world Gentile cities like Tyre and Sidon, Sodom and Nineveh, and to the Queen of Sheba's search for wisdom! Again, only the cleansed Samaritan returns to give thanks to Jesus, and only the good Samaritan tends the man fallen among thieves.

St Luke pauses with delight at all these signs of Jesus' regard for the Gentiles, yet he only draws out at greater length what is implicit in St Mark and St Matthew.

Jesus shaped and planned His ministry in such a way as to hasten the coming of the Kingdom. In His early ministry He thought that a people prepared from among the Jews by repentance and faith would be sufficient to bring it. Later He believed that the Kingdom was held back by the sins of the Jews, and He was led to make Himself a sin-offering so as to put away the obstructing cause. In the course of His ministry He came in contact with good and faithful Gentiles, who always gladdened His heart, because they were an earnest of a vast number of Gentiles coming from north and south and east and west, who would enter the Kingdom when it was manifested, not because His name had been preached to them, but because of their inherent fitness. Therefore, when He sent His disciples out two and two and charged them not to go to any of the Gentile cities, He was displaying not Jewish bigotry, but a desire to hasten that Day which should be a blessing to both faithful Jew and Gentile alike.

It is important to note that He did not often preach Himself, but always the Kingdom, and by so doing He shut the gate of the Kingdom on no single soul in the whole world that lived a faithful life, and thus Jesus is shown to us as far above Jewish bigotry and exclusiveness.

[1] Luke iv. 27. [2] Luke vii. 2.

## IV

St John sees Jesus as the Divine Master of the mystical life. St Mark made plain how Jesus came to make a distinction between His disciples who were within and the people who were without. He required of those without repentance and faith, but to those within He gave to understand the mystery of the Kingdom.

St John is wholly intent on the esoteric things. In the chronology and order of his gospel he is guided by the intrinsic symbolism of Jesus' life and work. Hence it is different in kind from the Synoptics, and it is as impossible to combine them as oil and water. The advanced critics suppose that St John gives the experience of the Church at the end of the first century. A strange conclusion when one perceives that the Church is never once mentioned ! The true fact of absorbing interest is that St John knows about Christ and His mission to Israel as given in the Synoptics, but it is his object to present Jesus as the rejected Messiah, turning to individuals—His disciples, Nicodemus, the Woman of Samaria—and revealing to them the innermost meaning of His Messianic claim that He was the Son of God. Hence while insisting that Jesus was manifested to Israel and rejected, that He came to His own and His own received Him not, he yet reveals Jesus in His most intimate private talks, and presents Him in a way that is implied by the Synoptists, but never dwelt on by them, since it did not come within their special purpose.

Without the testimony of the Fourth Gospel we should hardly have known that Jesus was a mystic, although once St John has illuminated this aspect of Jesus it is easy to find it supported, even in the gospel of St Mark.

It was the glowing personality and constraining power of Jesus working in St John that brought his own mysticism to such consummate perfection. We judge of the seed by the fruit ; and since Jesus was the great Sower who dropped the seed that eventually bore fruit as the Fourth Gospel, we get a fresh glimpse of the greatness of Jesus which was so manifold in its fruits.

And how infinitely precious this document has been down the centuries !

It has been a translucent stream carrying in its gentle current not only born mystics like the Neoplatonists, the

Celtic Saints, St Bernard, Dante, St Francis of Assisi, and St Catherine of Siena, Catholic and Protestant mystics, and intoxicated saints of Spain and Russia, but also the Augustines, Chrysostoms, the Luthers and Calvins, the Maurices and Harnacks. If there is one thing certain amidst many that are uncertain about this mysterious Gospel it is that it is inspired.

## V

The Book of the Acts of the Apostles does not help us to realise the historical Jesus, but it has great importance for other purposes. The two chief persons with whom it is concerned were Peter and Paul ; and these two represent the two sides of Jesus' mission to Jew and Gentile.

Both are agreed that the offer of Jesus and the Kingdom to Israel is not yet withdrawn. True, Israel had rejected her King and crucified Him ; but He had risen again and ascended into Heaven. On the eve of His ascension He had given directions concerning the work of the Apostles. As Jesus had been a minister of the circumcision, so Peter was to carry on the Master's work as an apostle of the circumcision. His gospel was necessarily changed from that of Jesus by the fact of His death. Jesus offered Himself and the Kingdom to Israel on the condition of her repentance. Peter offered the return of Jesus from Heaven and the Kingdom on the same condition of repentance. He summed up the substance of his preaching and that of the apostles in an address to the Jews : The God of our fathers raised up Jesus, whom ye slew and hanged on a tree. Him hath God exalted with His right hand to be a Prince and a Saviour, for to give repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sins.[1] Repent ye therefore, . . and He shall send Jesus Christ.[2]

Israel had but to repent, and Jesus would come again immediately and establish the promised Kingdom.

With all this Paul was fully agreed. He had no quarrel with Peter and James for being apostles to the Jews, but for their slowness to apprehend the Gentiles' inclusion in the coming Kingdom, and their opinion that a Gentile must first become a Jew. His gospel to the Gentiles was also that Jesus should return from heaven and establish the Kingdom; but whereas Peter was preaching a national repentance, Paul was preaching to individual Gentiles, who should through

[1] Acts v. 30–31. [2] Acts iii. 19–20.

their repentance and faith enter into the Kingdom promised to Israel.

This is the gospel that was preached for about thirty years after Jesus' ascension, and which St Paul set forth with great power in his letters to the Thessalonians, Galatians, and first letter to the Corinthians. It was eschatological, and the last things all turned on the repentance of Israel. By the year 60 Peter as well as Paul knew that their hope was doomed to disappointment. Israel remained obdurate. While she had the light, she would not walk in the light, and darkness had overtaken her. She would not use what she had, and it was taken away. Word after word that Jesus had spoken started to memory and illuminated the situation. Finally, they turned to the same chapter in Isaiah as the Master when He took to teaching in parables, and they agreed that Israel's apostasy was foretold by the prophet.[1]

Here was a deadlock. Only a further revelation could teach them what to do.

The supreme need brought the supreme response. Paul was the chosen vessel of the further revelation. Let us revert a little in his life.

St Paul does not help us directly to a knowledge of Jesus, and whatever he may have heard of His earthly life he kept to himself. He serves us because when his disagreeable, bigoted, harsh, and cruel character was made again, it was by the impact of the Spirit of Jesus working on his religion-consumed soul, and we get a reflex glimpse of the power of Jesus' personality that could work such a marvellous transformation.

St Paul dated his conversion from the sudden vision of Jesus that he experienced while on an inquisitorial visit to Damascus. The vision was subjective, and effected what he called in after years the unveiling of Christ in him. Christ in him rescued him from a dying religion, brought him out of the bondage of the law, and set him at liberty under the law of grace, re-created his whole being, and gave a new direction to his whole life. Christ in him was his life, salvation, redemption, justification, his holiness, and his glory. This rich spiritual experience was awakened and perfected in him through faith in the Lord Jesus, so that he instinctively felt that his inner spiritual life was organically united with Jesus Christ, who was an objective fact. The great points in his creed were

[1] Isaiah vi.

that Jesus Christ was crucified, dead, buried, rose again, and ascended into heaven, and each point was repeated in his life as the old man was crucified, dead, and buried with Christ, and the new man was raised up with Christ, and made to sit with Christ in the heavenly places.[1]

During this process of transformation he perceived that the new life ousted the old, that old things passed away.[2] He co-operated willingly in crucifying the flesh, for at the moment he could say, I have been crucified with Christ; he could add, nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me.[3]

So far St Paul's teaching is to us marvellously fresh and inspiring, for it came straight out of a first-hand and glowing experience; but according to the latest authorities he was driven by the imperious need for a system to round off his teaching by tags of rabbinical lore inherited from Gamaliel, and purple patches of apocalyptic which had not died with Jesus, but has turned the heads of so many ardent Christians even to our own times. His rabbinism made him believe in the myth of the sons of God who became enamoured of the daughters of men, and begot a race of giants; and this was at the back of his injunction to women to keep their hats on in church, lest there should be a repetition of that old scandal. His apocalyptic inheritance gave him the confident expectation that the Day of the Lord was at hand, which would be a day of wrath to sinners. Since his vocation was to the Gentiles, he preached with tireless energy in many Gentile cities to the children of wrath, that through repentance and faith in the Lord Jesus Christ they might become children of grace. Then when Christ came again 'with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God,' then the dead in Christ should rise first, and all those that were alive at His coming should be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so they should be ever with the Lord.[4]

Those who had received Christ were already raised with Him in the spirit, and seated with Him in the heavenly places, and this spiritual resurrection was the earnest of the completed resurrection when the faithful dead should return in spiritual bodies, and they who were alive would experience the transformation of their earthy bodies through the swallowing up of mortality by the Life that was in them.

This modern reading of St Paul arises from a great con-

[1] Rom. vi., and Eph. ii. 1–6.
[2] 1 Cor. v. 17.
[3] Gal. ii. 20.
[4] 1 Thes. iv. 16–17.

fusion. We have seen that St Paul was agreed with St Peter in his hope of the immediate return (*παρουσία*) of Jesus provided Israel repented. When he knew for certain that Israel remained impenitent, and the offer of the Kingdom was withdrawn, then of necessity he deeply modified his gospel in accordance to a new revelation he received, and for this new gospel of St Paul we must turn specially to his letters to the Ephesians, Philippians, and Colossians.

He now preached not Christ and Israel, but Christ and the Church. Because Israel had refused the great grace offered her, God turned to the Gentiles that He might gather out a people whom He might knit together and present as a chaste bride to Christ. The hope he set before the Gentiles was not the return of Christ to Israel, but the rapture of the bride, the Church, when she should without dying be translated to meet her Lord.

Just as the death, resurrection, and ascension of Christ were facts also of his spiritual experience, so they would be repeated in the whole body; and the Great Day of the Lord would be when the ascension of Jesus could no longer remain an inward spiritual experience of the Church, but must become an outward fact when she too ascended like her Lord into Heaven.

Israel's unbelief could not finally make of none effect the promises of God. When the fullness of the Gentiles was come —and there is no time limit assigned—then once more the ancient offer to Israel will be renewed, the gospel as preached by Jesus, Peter, and Paul himself in his early ministry will again be proclaimed to Israel. Israel will repent, and those Gentiles who have missed the heavenly calling of the Church will yet be capable of salvation from the great riches accruing to the world through Israel's triumphant faith.[1]

## VI

St James, in his epistle, subscribes himself a servant of God, and of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Since the Reformation, and Luther's contemptuous dismissal of his 'epistle of straw,' it has been customary to think of him as advocatin gsalvation by works; and certainly the hoary controversy of the relative value of faith and works has bulked largely at some time in the history of every one of the world's

[1] Rom. xi.

great religions. But James has much to say on a very different subject.

He had watched closely the way of the rich man and the way of the poor. Being a poor man himself he had doubtless struggled against that resentment towards the rich which so often poisons the poor, and which gives them lynx eyes wherever the rich are concerned.

He observed that the rich oppressed the poor, dragged them before the judgment seats, blasphemed the holy name of Christ, and occupied the chief places in the assemblies.[1] The poor reaped the rich man's fields, and received only part of the wages due to them. They were oppressed, condemned, robbed, but having no power they remained dumbly non-resistant.[2]

James concludes that a true servant of Jesus Christ is impartial and above respecting persons. Each man stands by his own merits. If he knows that whatever value he has comes from God, and he respects himself accordingly, he will extend the same regard to others, and so fulfil the royal law, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself; and any failure just here makes him guilty of the breach of the whole law.

If James were alive to-day he would be called a social democrat; but not having heard of the thing, he was content to trace his teaching to Jesus Christ; and so we can gather from his testimony that already in the infant Church there was a movement concerned with social questions, and that it owed its prime inspiration to the person and teaching of Jesus Christ.

## VII

The Epistle to the Hebrews approaches Jesus Christ from a very different angle.

Its author, an Alexandrian Jew, had all the advantages of a liberal training.

We are accustomed to think of Judaism as essentially narrow; and so orthodox Judaism has ever been, though not narrower than our partisan Christianity. But whenever the Jews have been scattered, there have always been enterprising spirits among them who mastered the best thought of the Gentiles, and found that their native religion could adapt itself to the new modes of thought without losing any of its essential content. Spinoza in the seventeenth century, and

[1] Jas. ii. 6, 7. [2] Jas. v. 6.

the Spanish Jews in the Middle Ages, are examples ; and at the time of Christ the Jew Philo living in Alexandria was doing the same thing. Always they have been regarded as heretics by the central orthodox party, but we have only to run our eye down history to see that some of the finest specimens of humanity have been liberal Jews.

The Alexandrian Jews, and Philo in particular, were immersed in Plato, and in adapting Judaism to Platonism they were preparing not only the way for two writers in the New Testament—the authors of the Fourth Gospel and the Epistle to the Hebrews—but also for the preaching of the Gospel beyond the Palestinian border in Gentile cities.

One author lived at Ephesus, the other also in a Gentile city, and both knew the difficulties of preaching the Gospel largely couched in terms of Jewish apocalyptic to people trained in the Greek Schools ; and both learned much from Philo how to overcome the difficulty by translating the Gospel into the terms and modes of Platonic philosophy.

This is not the place to point out the Philonic tendencies in the Epistle to the Hebrews ; rather I am anxious to see Jesus in the side-light that the author has flashed on Him.

For this writer Jesus was a priest ; and he undertook to write to the Hebrews to persuade them that Jesus was a priest, though He had none of those credentials which were essential in the eyes of the Hebrews. If he could find anything in the Holy Scriptures to support his argument his object would be much facilitated. And this he could do. The Hebrew Scriptures wrote of one, Melchisedec,[1] who was a prophet, priest, and King, not by right of descent—his parents were lay folk among the commons—but by his own intrinsic right. The author concludes that from time to time God gives His direct call to a man, and raises him to high rank because of his inherent fitness, like Joseph, and David, and Jesus.

This was Jesus' view of Himself as we gather from His words when He refused to tell the priests by what authority He acted.

Jesus was a priest because a true priest is one who bears in his heart every one of his flock, like Aaron, who carried on his breastplate the names of the twelve tribes of Israel when he went into the Holy of Holies. Only the largest and deepest nature is able for such a divine task ; and because most priests who can point to their priestly descent or episcopal ordination

[1] Gen. xiv. 18.

have not this large nature they lapse into perfunctoriness or, worse still, they become active opposers of the truth if it threatens to touch their power or prerogative.

Jesus manifested His priesthood when He loved the people, refused no appeal to His pity, was merciful to sinners and to those turned out of the way, carried them in His heart and in His prayers, and, offering Himself for their sins, brought His self-oblation into heaven that all who took hold of Him might share in His victorious life.

Moralist and artist alike assure us to-day that the best and richest life is the one with deepest sympathies for all sorts of men and women, apart from their profession of faith or degree of righteousness. Our Shakespeare, our Blake, and our George Eliot loom large from this point of view ; but central in this spiritual firmament, like the sun in the heavens, is Jesus Christ, who is for ever the great high-priest of humanity.

## VIII

Lastly, there is the often repeated argument of the Church, which must never be overlooked.

The Anglican, Greek, and Roman Churches have filled the world with their works. The works have not been always good ; sometimes they have been downright bad ; yet they have undeniably inspired every kind of goodness and every kind of heroism. In the course of their evolution they have bifurcated, and thrown off vigorous shoots growing into stern dutiful presbyterian, peaceful quaker, Bible-loving brethren, and enthusiastic methodist. For in whatever form Christianity is a great stubborn fact. It still has power to change hearts and lives, to create a new hope and a new charity. It can still reach the poor and destitute, the despised and the outcast ; it is the only thing to which we can look with any confidence now the Great War is over, and the work of re-constructing Europe is beginning. Perhaps the builder-statesmen will realise that they have tried to build without the chief corner-stone, and by the way of repentance and faith will build Christian States in which it will be possible to live Christian lives, and Jesus' dream of an outward Kingdom be at last a blessed reality. Such a consummation would show us that Jesus was greater than we knew.

Our knowledge of Jesus Christ, then, is not dependent only on the professedly partial presentations of Him in the

Gospels of St Matthew and St Mark. He has actually inspired countless movements, mystical, social, devotional, practical. Having once acted in this world His force cannot be lost, even if the New Testament had never been written. Truly He lives in the New Testament, but He lives also in tradition, and He has entered into the world's constitution. He is part of the world's great memory. He re-creates, inspires, fulfils. He is the One Man of whom we must take full account when we go forward to create a better future.

# CHAPTER VI

## THE GOSPEL OF THE KINGDOM

### I

We have seen that Jesus clothed His vision in the prophetic an apocalyptic images that had fed His imagination and inspired His mission.

Early in His ministry He became conscious of a breach with Moses, which really involved a breach with the past, and this fact alone proves sufficiently that He was not merely a picturesque figure standing at the end of a passing age, but the herald of a new. He had no interest in destroying. That He did destroy was because in standing as a Creator He was compelled to drop those things that were no longer fruitful, and save from the wreckage of the past just so much as could be carried over into the future and so fulfilled.

The world's mighty spirits who have stood at the beginning of the ages with a vision of things to come have always struggled to find an appropriate clothing for their vision. Even so, Jesus confronted with the same difficulty was finally compelled to fetch the vesture from the past, or remain silent ; for while He knew that it was not an exact fit, yet not foreseeing the way that Christianity would go, He was unable to borrow a better from the future.

It is to be remarked of any system worth the name that all its several parts adhere. Touch a part and one touches all. The Christianity that has come down to us, whether in the catholic form or the evangelical, presents to us a body of doctrines that allows us no picking and choosing. If one wishes to drop inconvenient doctrines, like the eighteenth century Deists tried to do, one must either drop them all or transvalue them all.

Jesus inherited the eschatological system of His time, whose parts were quite coherent, and likewise stood or fell

together. Its most important doctrines were concerning the Kingdom, the Messiah, Judgment, and Eternal Life; and inextricably bound up with these were other doctrines of election and predestination, heaven and hell, angels and archangels, and the Devil and his angels.

Jesus not only departed from Moses, but treated the apocalyptic doctrines with creative freedom. In His short ministry He began to transvalue the ideas of the Kingdom and of the Messiah; but the time was too short to do the same for all the parts, and He left the doctrines of predestination, judgment, heaven, and hell precisely where He found them, thus making it incumbent on the Church to complete the process which He had begun.

The Church, arrested by her paralysing doctrine of the verbal inspiration of the Scriptures, adopted the doctrines where Jesus left them, not seeing that if she took literally such dogmas as everlasting punishment, or a future bodily resurrection from the dead, she should have taken literally the visible advent of Christ in the clouds of heaven, and His reign on earth beginning sometime in the first century. Facts forbade her to do this, and she had resource to a forced interpretation of the Scriptures to harmonise them with the orderly parts of her own system.

Extreme eschatologists may insist that the process of transvaluing was not initiated by Jesus; but when one remembers that He gave utterance to the words about new and old wine, new and old cloth, it becomes evident that the process was not only begun by Him, but would have been completed by Him had He not died so young.

Jesus left no doctrine, not even of the Kingdom or of His Person, in its final form. We cannot decide dogmatically how far He meant certain of His doctrines to be taken literally, but it is clear that we must take them all symbolically, and, wherever the symbol fails, seek to re-clothe afresh the underlying idea in a way that will make it fruitful in the changed condition of our times.

## II

The Kingdom of God was Jesus' master-phrase. It governed His every thought and doctrine. It is the key to the mystery of His actions; it is that to which He subjected even Himself, conscious though He was of an imperious

personality. In its light we have to read all He said from the time He announced its immediate advent till the Last Supper, when He gave His disciples a sacramental pledge that they should eat bread in the Kingdom when it came.

Jesus considered the Kingdom from two points of view. it was both present and future. In the present it was inward, in the future it should be outward. Now it was hidden in men's hearts, then it should be set up on earth.

Yet the Kingdom was not to come from without. Jesus had observed everywhere the law that there is nothing hid that shall not be manifested; neither anything kept secret, but that it should come abroad.[1] This law governed the Kingdom too. Now it was immanent, but the day would come when it could no longer be kept hidden, there would be a great unveiling, and the secret Kingdom would be manifest to all, like the lightning in the skies, and this because the coming Kingdom was organically connected with the Kingdom first come in men's hearts.

The inner Kingdom is eternal. In all ages holy and humble men of heart have belonged to it. In it they have lived and moved and had their being. From it they have drawn their insight and their power. In the large thought of Jesus this was true of righteous Gentile as well as of faithful Jew.

In the Old Testament the prophets, seers, saints, and poets were children of the Kingdom. That is why the Psalmist plumbed the depths of spiritual experience, and uttered inspired songs that have become the devotional language of all ages; why the prophet, realising his membership in the timeless Kingdom, uttered prophecies that are true for all time; and why the priest could dispense the treasures of the Kingdom to his people, and feed their souls with priceless wine and milk.

The designation of the unseen world as the Kingdom of God did not become fully explicit till the time when the Book of Daniel was written. There the Kingdom of God is contrasted with the transitory kingdoms of this world, and differs from them because it cannot be destroyed, but remains for ever and ever.[2]

Once the idea was articulated it became the impassioned hope of the best Jewish spirits, some of whom devoted themselves so entirely to it that they even became eunuchs, lest they

[1] St Mark iv. 22. [2] Daniel vii.

should be turned aside from doing all that was in their power towards its advent.

Jesus regarded the Kingdom as entrusted to the Jewish hierarchy, and to the scribes and Pharisees who sat in Moses' seat. These held by divine right the keys of the Kingdom; but since they abused this privilege, neither entering themselves nor allowing others who would to enter, Jesus by His own authority took the Kingdom from them, and gave it and the keys to His disciples who had not been chosen from the priesthood, but for the most part from classes whom the priests despised.

Jesus Himself lived so wholly in the inner Kingdom that its mysteries were to Him as clear as sunlight. His mighty works of saving, healing, and exorcising were evidence that the Kingdom was in His heart. He lived a life that might be lived by any man into whose heart, too, the Kingdom should come. It gave to Him an object of love and devotion in the Almighty Father; it awoke in Him the consciousness of abounding life; it was an inner circle not concentric with the circles which men draw for themselves, and thus though His life was supremely natural, yet it appeared eccentric to those outside the Kingdom.

Repentance and faith admitted any one into the Kingdom and these were all that were demanded. But there is a great fundamental difference in the souls that enter the Kingdom. Some are already so rich and have so much, that to them much more is given, and they become wise stewards of the mysteries of the Kingdom, guarding a treasury from which they produce things old and new.

But that is not all.

The best prophets were not content to rejoice in the inner Kingdom, and to think that it was all well with their souls. As they looked around they beheld a world given up to injustice cruelty, and lust, in which the rich held the power in their hands, and the poor were crushed under a ruthless tyranny. Again and again the prophets were tempted to despair of this world altogether; but they overcame their despair, and while no longer trusting to human measures to bring about a new world, they conceived that it might yet be done if only the inner Kingdom of experience could become an outer fact of history.

It was this fine hope which had kindled John the Baptist, who in his turn kindled the soul of Jesus; and it became the

impassioned desire of Jesus from the first day of His public appearance. As a child at Nazareth wandering about the fields, He had watched the birds of the air, and considered the lilies of the field. He had pondered on the miracle of the seed working invisibly in the earth and then suddenly manifested in flower, shrub, or tree. Always, everywhere, He recognised the same law from inward to outward. He would go forth and prepare His people Israel, into whose heart the Kingdom should come and set up its power ; and then, suddenly, the day would come when it could no longer be hidden, but would be unveiled and manifested outwardly, and that would actually bring a blessing to the whole world.

So then for a little while He and the Kingdom must live a hidden life, but when the Kingdom was revealed, then He, too, should be revealed in glory and take His rightful place as the heir of the Kingdom.

In His early preparatory mission He proclaimed the invisible and immanent Kingdom ; but later, when He was intent on making His blood an offering of obedience unto God, He spoke of it exclusively as visible and imminent.

The eschatological hope of Jesus has so taken hold of some moderns, and it has been a key opening so many locks, that they have thought that Jesus imagined that the Kingdom was future in every sense. If this was so, then Jesus fell far behind the best psalmists and prophets. But while we may readily concede that Jesus' vision was eschatological, yet we must insist also that He made the last things depend on men and women ' living faithfully a hidden life ' in the present as children of the Kingdom.

The coming Kingdom is connected by Jesus with His Church, which is the congregation or assembly of the Messiah, consisting of the elect not only of the Jews but of all nations. Jesus left His thought of the Church undeveloped, since it did not present itself to Him as needing urgent consideration for the present. He chose His twelve disciples for its nucleus ; but the Church would not come into actual being till the Kingdom had first come, and therefore the Kingdom claimed all His thought.

Since the Kingdom has not yet come, it is necessary to note that neither has the Church as Jesus imagined it. That which actually came and was born of the travail of Jesus' soul has taken a totally different course in history from anything pictured for us in the words of Jesus.

## III

The generation of Jesus Christ passed away, and many others. Still the Kingdom tarried, and instead of the Kingdom came the Church.

The Church, with her consciousness of being the very body of her ascended Lord, and as such entrusted by Him to carry on the glorious mission which He had begun, drew the whole of men's attention to herself. The defining of her doctrines against continual heresies, the organisation of her ministry, the tracing her descent from the Lord—all these were engrossing preoccupations, which allowed of little thought being given to the Kingdom except by the heretics, who held on persistently till the fourth century to their hope of Christ's thousand-year reign on earth. Then St Augustine declared that the Church was already in the millennium; and from his time unto the present day the Church has been satisfied with some such explanation, while the hope which animated the Christians of the first generation has been kept alive by obscure sects, and latterly by the evangelicals, whether in the Church of England or on the Continent.

When the Church had come to complete self-consciousness, then she found herself with a head at Rome claiming authority from Peter, and beginning to use the keys with a peremptoriness that astonished and enthralled Europe. The papacy, fired with grand ideas, and also with the will to power, instinctively identified the Kingdom with the Church, and under the Hildebrandine popes proceeded apace to push the claims of the theocratic Church. Gregory VII's one consuming thought was that the Church should control the States of the world and all human relations.

He created legates with power above bishops who overran Europe, and kept him acquainted with what was happening in the remotest regions. He did the forever popular thing of attacking the clergy. He insisted without compromise on their celibacy. He enlisted the sympathies of the people. Kings received their kingdoms from his hands. The papacy was set above Church and State alike, and he, the supreme Pontiff, was answerable to God alone.

Gregory VII's successors pushed forward his master idea. How completely it triumphed was magnificently set forth to all men when the imperious Frederick Barbarossa, meeting

the Pope Alexander III in Venice, acknowledged his defeat by stooping to kiss the feet of the Pope. Later Innocent III called himself no longer the Vicar of Peter, but the Vicar of Christ, and set himself to realise to the uttermost Hildebrand's ideal of the papacy, while he also dreamed of the unification of Italy under the papal rule. We may admit, frankly, that from the eleventh to the thirteenth centuries it was good for Europe that the papacy held such power. Gregory VII and Innocent III, though not exactly Christians, were great men with lofty, far-reaching ideas. And though they drew their inspiration from the Old Testament rather than from the New, yet they, at least, seized from the New Testament the idea of a mighty spiritual kingdom set up on the earth wielding spiritual and secular power. If in their effort to keep their power the Church became secularised, rather than the kingdoms of the world spiritualised, we must not blame them for their inevitable failure. Where they did succeed was in holding powerful kings and nobles in check through terror of their interdicts and excommunications, until the peoples themselves grew strong enough to set a limit to the power of their kings.

So long as the popes were great men all went well with the papacy ; but in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries they fell under the sway of the Italian Renaissance and became far more pagan than Christian in spirit. The power of the kings whom the papacy had overcome passed into the papal Church and was almost boundless. Graciously she distributed her indulgences when she wanted money to further her pagan designs, and rapidly forwarded the time when it should be her turn for her power to be broken, and the affairs of Europe set into a new course.

In the sixteenth-century Reformation the thought of St Paul was paramount with the reformers rather than the thought of Jesus. Christ was preached, and protestant religion took an individualistic turn. The genius of the movement was destructive, although deep within the new world was already conceived. But the power of the papacy must be broken, and it helped the reformers to their Herculean task when they perceived that the Kingdom was not the Church, and that the Church by identifying the two had not only taken too much upon herself, but had acted under an illusion.

Thus men were too intent on fighting the papacy to have any time to give birth to fruitful thoughts about the Kingdom.

To-day our instincts have become more social, and the

extreme individualism of protestantism, which culminated in the Nietzschean superman, no longer appeals to us. The Oxford Movement attempted to meet this social need by the revival of the Church idea and sacraments, but by vaguely identifying again the Kingdom and the Church the force of the Kingdom was lost. It is the Higher Criticism that has made plain the paramount place the Kingdom held in the thought of Jesus ; and since this fact has reached us when all are beginning to awaken to the importance of social questions, now should be the time when one is applied to the other, and it becomes manifest that the only solution to the social problems will be in the application of Jesus' master idea.

## IV

Is Christ's Gospel of the Kingdom a fruitful Gospel for to-day ?

Did He practically give it a world-wide interpretation so as to keep its significance when other things had passed away ?

To these questions we can answer a simple Yes.

Jesus' teaching of the inner Kingdom needs no re-stating.

His teaching of the outward Kingdom and Israel, according to St Paul, is in abeyance but will ultimately be fulfilled.

Except that the outward Kingdom is promised to Israel only, almost all that Jesus says about it applies equally to it in its inward aspect. And therefore we must not repeat the mistake of overlooking much of Jesus' vital teaching as if it only applied to the Jews.

Let us try and grasp Jesus' thought of this world.

The world was given over to iniquity. The kingdoms of the world were in the power of Satan. It was full of murder, oppression, crime. For the seer whose eyes were open to detect an eternal order one of two things was inevitable. Either he despaired of the world altogether, and put all his hope in the unseen Kingdom, or he believed that God would give a supernatural visible Kingdom to Israel, directly ruled by Him, and through which all nations of the earth might be blessed.

The great kingdoms of this world rise, fall, and pass away, and are as transitory and unstable as man himself, who may reach his three-score years and ten, and then withers and fades like the grass and flower of the field when the breath of the Lord bloweth upon it.

As is man so are the kingdoms that he builds. If he is unjust, so are the kingdoms ; if he builds his life on a natural foundation, so do the kingdoms rest on the same shifting sand. The instability of the kingdoms is bound up with the instability of man who creates them. And therefore an abiding principle must be brought into man's life, if an everlasting kingdom is ever to come. But this condition can be fulfilled. When a man repents (repentance involves the unmaking of the mind of the flesh and the remaking of the mind of the spirit), and has faith in the divine order underlying this transitory world, he then enters into the invisible Kingdom, and gains the deep spiritual consciousness that he has eternal life. The perception of 'the eternal, which is always present to the wise,' at once introduces the abiding element into his changing life, assures him of immortality, and gives him the consciousness that his life is resting on a divine basis.

Working from this deep experience he then proceeds to see that the social body of which he is a member must rest on the same divine basis, for he knows that on any other foundation it will pass away.

Jesus Christ on His high watch-tower had caught in vision the red dawn of a new age. Compelled to clothe His vision, He drew the supernatural details of the coming Kingdom from apocalyptic imagery. Some of these are clearly symbolical, others He intended to be understood literally. Literally, He believed that God would inaugurate the Kingdom ; that its sudden advent would be a day of resurrection ; that He its Head should be raised up to enter on His Messianic office ; that the faithful dead should rise up too and come with Him ; and that the faithful living should in a moment be changed in body, and thus all, no longer marrying or giving in marriage, should live like the angels, and die no more. Symbolically He pictured Himself on the throne of glory, and His disciples on twelve thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel. Two were specially chosen by God to sit one on His right hand, the other on His left. They were to be Messiah's assembly or Church holding the keys, and exercising their authority by opening and shutting, binding and loosing. There should be full recognition of rank, angels and archangels among the heavenly hosts, prophets, apostles, and martyrs among the redeemed from earth, the elect from all nations, and rulers given ten, five, or two cities to manage, according to the degree of ability and faithfulness they had exercised on earth.

The law of the Kingdom was to be the law of love working with full spontaneity, which, while superseding many requirements of the moral law, would yet fulfil them in its own abounding life. Each member should be taught directly by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit. Life in the Kingdom should be eternal.

This supernatural Kingdom would be the inevitable unveiling of the supernatural life awakened already in the faithful at their conversion.

Finally, Jesus expected the Kingdom to come as the speedy result of His self-oblation on the cross.

At once we detect elements of illusion in this expectation. Truly Jesus stood at the beginning of a new age, but when it was fully born and ran its course, it was quite unlike what He had imagined. It saw the rise of a great organised Church, marvellous alike in her greatness and her sins, her tenderness, her relentlessness, her arrogance, and her humility, which has been a haven of rest for baffled and bewildered souls, and which has been the greatest drag on every forward movement of the human spirit. But the Kingdom has not yet come. Jesus in vision lifted above time lost sight of time when He declared that the Kingdom should come at once. Yet the vision remains; and though it would be rash to say that when the Kingdom comes it will not realise all the supernatural elements that Jesus expected with it, yet we can say with certainty that it will be essentially supernatural, because it will rest on the supernatural life already in man's heart.

We have to face frankly the element of illusion interwoven with every prophet's vision of the future. Without it Jesus' mission would have failed. It was because popular expectation was aroused that Jesus caught the ears of the people by His confident announcement that the Kingdom was at hand, and that His message appealed also to what was best in the thoughts of His best hearers. The fine gold of His Gospel needed the illusory element to make it work. And that is true in all ages. The great prophets down to John the Baptist worked by illusion. When the work is accomplished, then it is time to prick the illusion by the sharp instrument of history, but only to prepare the way for a forward movement which shall in turn project its own appropriate illusion. Many may hate to think that there was any illusion in the message of Christ, but it only shows how completely He worked with the limitations inseparable from our human nature. To

eliminate it out of life would make life intolerable. It is the vaporous aura of the truth catching all the colours of the rainbow as the sun rises on the seer's horizon, assuring him that the ultimate Reality is not less but greater, and more dazzling than anything he has glimpsed in his wildest dreams.

We must assimilate the two aspects of the Kingdom.

St John's Christ tells Nicodemus that unless a man is born from above he cannot see the Kingdom, and unless he is born of water and the spirit he cannot enter into it. The Kingdom in its rudiments is in every man ; its awakening, which involves a remaking of the man, gives him the consciousness of entering into it. Then as a child of the Kingdom, if he has any enterprise, he will begin to explore and search out its hidden treasures. If he search long enough he will find that it contains everything. First of all it brings the consciousness of eternal life. In this world a man driven by imperious desires finds nothing stable. In proportion as his desires increase and cannot be satisfied, he realises that he is engulfed in the sensuous world of becoming ; and his memory alone, which connects his impressions, gives him any inkling of an abiding life. But though memory may whisper of immortality, the deep consciousness of it can only come after the new birth into the Kingdom ; and then it is that he roots his life in the eternal, and gains a central rest amidst the whirling changes of time. The eternal life starts him on the supernatural life, always understanding that the supernatural lies at the heart of the natural, and he learns not to divorce nature and supernature, but to unify the two, and bring all the so-called natural things under the quickening and power of the supernatural.

To know what a man can do who lives daily in the Kingdom and wields its powers we have only to turn to the life of Jesus.

He came to what is called in modern phrase complete self-realisation. The three things that create personality—freedom of thought, freedom of will, and freedom of love—were His in singular fullness. Having none of 'the honours that dishonour, of the titles which degrade, of the functions that deaden,'[1] He was free to grow into a perfection of manhood which strikes by its towering dignity. His sovereignty of character was of a piece with His sovereignty over sin and

[1] See Gustave Flaubert. Quoted by Sturge Moore in *Art and Life*, p. 16.

disease, and reached the creative pitch when what He commanded in faith was immediately done.

All these are marks of the child of the Kingdom, no less than of the Master of the Kingdom. By the time the Kingdom has given its child a God to worship, a Christ to adore, and brothers to love, inspiration for insight, and eternal powers to wield, then the modern child of the Kingdom can go forth like Jesus of old, and in His power repeat His mighty works.

Happily the children of the inner Kingdom have lived in all lands. The Church puts at our disposal the rich treasury of the writings of the Saints ; but if we think that such spiritual literature lacks variety, we can turn to the East, and India, Persia, China, and Japan will freely offer us the writings of their wise ones, who will let us into the secret of the mystical life as understood by the children of the Kingdom in all ages.

But we must not stop here if we are to receive the full Gospel of Jesus. We have yet to translate the inward experience into outward fact.

The soul can find itself only in a pure community. Our socialists have at least taught us that the State reacts on man in every department of life, so that he cannot do the things that he would. If the son is to 'get on' he must be educated conventionally, and conform to things that in no wise rest on a divine basis. All sorts and conditions of men, including women and children, are caught in the wheels of the State machinery, and even the best of them, who make a desperate effort to keep clean hands, are compelled to touch pitch. The man who has been born again in the Kingdom is forced to deny his birthright by the State that has not been born again. John Bunyan was intent on saving Christian's soul by making him flee from the City of Destruction. To-day, we, like Tolstoi, perceive that it is the City of Destruction that needs to be saved, and to it we must devote our best energies.

It is clear that we must begin at once to bring the Kingdom into our homes, and at the same time we must work for a better social order, or the work in the family will be lost.

The family, for many years past, has been the subject of scathing criticism. Unfortunately, those whom the criticism concerns, the heads of families, are blissfully ignorant of it, unless it comes from the children, and then of course they wave it aside.

The clergyman's family is an example of what is generally a conscientious attempt to create a Christian home. There is a

silly and oft-repeated saying that the children of clergymen turn out badly. The direct reverse is the truth—they generally turn out very well, according to the testimony of almost every one except the parents themselves. They may think that the dear children who have never given a moment's trouble, who have been confirmed, and become communicants without a murmur, are their only good children, and are consoled by them as they think of those other members who have broken away from the family fold, and are threatening to bring down the father's grey hairs in sorrow to the grave. But these, given time, often prove through their splendid vitality that they have a high value that should gladden any father's heart.

Such a mistaken idea of values is not peculiar to parents who hold a particular view of Christianity: it prevails where they are sound evangelicals or equally sound old-fashioned tractarians. In the one family the children are worried because they are not 'converted,' in the other because they do not take kindly to Church ordinances which, so far, have no meaning for them.

If one looks closely, it is often found that the 'good' children have been so thoroughly broken in, that they have lost all initiative, and the 'bad' ones, having rebelled, have simply gravitated to the society of friends who, though less pious, are infinitely more agreeable and human as companions. The same thing happens in non-clerical families on which the clerical spirit has descended. The daughter who stays at home and becomes the household drudge is much appreciated by the parents made comfortable at her expense. The other, who leaves the home, and afterwards shows talent and sometimes genius in pursuit of one of the arts, is spoken of with apologies as the black sheep of the family. These families need the Gospel of the Kingdom. The parents believe only in yesterday's God. Not a few clergymen live on the stock of ideas supplied to them at their Theological College, and never seem to add to it. Ceasing to believe in a living God revealing Himself in the whirlwind of the present, they become more and more archaic, and perform no living function except beget children. These as they begin to grow and expand become conscious that the home atmosphere is stifling, and when the living God works in them they rebel.

The Gospel of the Kingdom, insomuch as its hope is for a better world down here, weans the man from sucking the breasts of the past, and by turning his eyes to the future makes

him for the second time spiritually alive. Here the children can help the parents, and if the parents see at least as far as the children, they may congratulate themselves that they too are still 'alive,' for that finally is the one thing that matters. Dying parents produce rebellious children, and it is only when the parents go on growing all through their lives that they can expect, not to keep the children at home, for that is not desirable, but to keep their friendship unto the end.

Yet, however successful live parents may be in building up a live home, they cannot altogether succeed without the co-operation of the State. The State, as it is, acts on every individual relentlessly, and since the sons must earn their living, they can do so only by repeated compromise. For this there is no remedy unless the State can be christened by the united consent of the rulers and the people.

The failure of the Hildebrandine popes to raise the States by bringing them under the power of the theocratic Church is warning to us not to try and repeat their methods. The Kingdom can never come outwardly until it has first come inwardly. Again, the inward Kingdom can only come inwardly when men begin to conform their lives to its ethics.

The ethics of the Kingdom are best summarised in the Sermon on the Mount. But a difficulty at once presents itself; for anyone who has ever tried to live according to its teaching finds that he cannot do so under the existing State.

In the early days of the Church it was taken for granted that a man could not live the Christian life completely in the world, hence there arose monastic houses, where men and women who wished to lead religious lives could retire out of the world and devote themselves to Christ. This made a sharp distinction between the religious and Christians in the world. The religious sought to fulfil the counsels of perfection: those in the world, to do just enough to ensure their soul's salvation. We may quarrel with the system, but it is impossible to say what else they could have done. The Reformation by its abolition of religious houses in England made it incumbent on Christians living in the world themselves to fulfil the counsels of perfection. This they soon found that they were unable to do, so they learnt to ignore the words of Jesus, and fell back on His atoning work as interpreted by Calvin or Luther. Hence Puritan Christianity helps us not at all to understand Jesus' thought of the Kingdom.

In the nineteenth century many men and women brought

up exclusively on salvationist Christianity rebelled, and cast about for something that should combine individual and corporate righteousness. Newman, with his ecclesiastical instincts, turned to the most highly organised Church ; Maurice, followed by Charles Kingsley, propounded a theory of Christian Socialism ; and a host of others shook off Christianity altogether, and observing that Christ's teaching was generally ignored by professing Christians, hastily decided that the Sermon on the Mount was impracticable.

We are to-day reaping the bitter fruits of past failure to apply Christ's teaching to the State. But the War thrust the State problem on us all, and we must solve it or perish. The divorce between individual and State morality caused Germany's teachers to declare that the State *is* force, and on that conviction Germany acted with a ruthlessness that appals. Our interest is to resist Germany to the uttermost, not only as we have done by land and sea, but her statecraft too, by finding out what States must do to be saved, unless we are prepared to let our children experience a repetition of the horrors through which we ourselves have passed.

Christ's imperious word to the individual was that he must repent and believe. That word is now sounding to the States of the world ; and if they will take it to heart and do it, we shall enter on the most glorious page in the world's history. Can the State be made Christian ? Hitherto statesmen have been either frankly Machiavellian, or they have tried to build the State on a partly moral foundation. There are no States without some moral elements. We are agreed, as a whole, to dismiss Machiavelli ; but we have still to inquire how State morality can be brought into line with the Ethics of the Kingdom.

The State is pushed by the law of life to which it is subject. In its long evolution it has thrown out many forms of government that were the best that it could do at the time. But it proceeds by no mechanical law, for ultimately it is the outcome of the will of its units. Hence we are driven back to the individual. Let a national mission of repentance and faith in the Kingdom of God be preached. Then when the Kingdom is set up in men's hearts, the time will be ripe for statesmen to christen the State, and it will become possible to live according to the whole teaching of Jesus Himself. If the nation could be brought to will that end, the Kingdom of God would come.

# CHAPTER VII

## WHO WAS JESUS?

### I

JESUS preached the Gospel of the Kingdom of God and Himself. It was His self-consciousness that inspired and shaped His message.

We see Him as His character reveals itself in history as a Man made up of supremely contrary qualities that are yet brought into a perfect unity. It is the unity and simplicity that first strike us, and only when we look again do we discover that there are innumerable facets concealing His transparent depth. It is nothing to say that He was strong and gentle—Samson knew the intimate relation of the lion and the honeycomb. Jesus was the most self-denying and self-insistent person that ever lived. His self-denial led Him to a slave's death on the cross, but His self-insistence made His way to the cross an imperial progress. He was proud and humble, long-suffering and impatient, gentle as a lamb, and capable of consuming anger, obedient and a rebel. Always He was imperious, to His disciples, to the people, to the hierarchy, to His mother; in His treatment of the Scriptures and the prophets, of eschatology and apocalypse. From one aspect His life grew like the lilies of the field till He reached His ascension glory; from another there are glimpses of a mighty inward storm and stress; and though, like the fertile earth, He yielded bread to the hungry, yet under He was 'turned up as it were fire.'[1] He was gentle to sinners, carelessly good Himself. He lived like a beggar, and went to His death as though all things in heaven and earth and hell must submit themselves to His sovereign will.

Such a One provokes a thousand contrary opinions about Himself. What was His?

[1] Job xxviii. 5.

We all of us have to give some account of ourselves to ourselves, and we seem unable to settle down until we dub ourselves soldier, sailor, physician, priest, or butcher, baker, candlestick-maker. Jesus started as carpenter. But He refused to settle down, and sought to find in some mystic title—apostle, priest, prophet—that which would embody His glowing self-consciousness. Each proved inadequate. There remained one more unique concept which had been fashioned slowly by the fervid genius of the Hebrew people. The Christ idea scarcely presented a clear image. It was bent into different shapes according as it passed through the mind of prophet or apocalyptist. The Christ might be the national Deliverer, or the Lord from Heaven, or the suffering Servant of Jehovah. Jesus' creative mind seized the apocalyptic Christ of Daniel and Enoch, combined it with the Suffering Servant of the Exile prophet, and took over such lineaments of the prophetic Christ as harmonised with Enoch's Son of Man. In this combination He fashioned the mode by which He was able to make Himself intelligible both to Himself and to His hearers after they were duly prepared. Yet even the Christ mode was not perfect, although it was to be perfected in the course of history.

The Christ for us is a wholly spiritual conception ; but it became so not because Jesus intellectually modified the idea, but because it stands for the measure of the spiritual stature of Him who bore it. Actually by His life He has given it world-wide significance, and the loss of it would be for ever the impoverishment of the world.

## II

St Paul approached the problem of the Person of Jesus from his experience of the indwelling Christ. On the day that it pleased God to reveal His Son in him, St Paul found that he was enriched in everything. Christ in him was life, holiness, redemption, and his hope of glory. Every day that he lived he discovered more and more of the unsearchable riches of Christ. To illustrate the closeness of his union with Christ he refers to the marriage bond between man and woman that makes them one flesh ; but even the unity of the flesh is but a faint image of the unity of spirit realised by him who is joined to the Lord.

This deep fresh experience of St Paul unites him with the mystics of all ages and countries. Indian, Persian, Egyptian,

Mahomedan mystics all in their own dialect speak of the unveiling of the Real Spiritual Being in their own hearts. Theosophists to-day know of a like experience. But there is one fundamental difference between St Paul and all non-Christian mystics. Theosophists identify their inner spirit with God. Each individual is but a mode of the manifestation of God. When the outer personality is destroyed, then the final absorption into God is reached which transcends all separateness. The home for this line of thought is, of course, India ; but one must not forget that many of India's teachers, like Tagore, express themselves much more nearly in the Christian modes. Now St Paul's experience, while closely related to all this mysticism, differs from it in that he never identified his inner spirit with the indwelling Christ. He was conscious of his own spirit living daily in ineffable communion with Christ ; but the passionate joy and inspiration which he found in this union was that his spirit and Christ were distinct and separate, and therefore each day was an adventure of going forth to meet the Christ, with whom he could realise his oneness in the precise measure that he knew that He was not himself.

This experience came to St Paul through the Apostles' preaching of Jesus Christ. His subjective experience was built up on objective facts. Apart from himself, whether he believed it or not, Jesus Christ had been crucified, dead, buried, raised up, and exalted to God's right hand for him ; his faith fastening on to these objective facts reproduced them in his own spiritual experience, and thus he never dreamt of separating the inner Christ of his experience from the Christ of history.

The Jesus of history had confessed openly to the high priest that He was the Christ the Son of the Blessed. St Paul, well instructed by Gamaliel in apocalyptic literature, knew that that was tantamount to a claim of eternal pre-existence, that He was the life-giver, that He should sit upon His throne, and that He should come again to judge the quick and the dead.[1] Hence, St Paul never separated the Christ of history from the eternal Christ. Faced by the Christ of experience, of history, and of eternity, he instinctively thought of the three as one, and it only remained to connect the One Christ with God.

This he did in a famous passage of his Epistle to the Philippians, in which he declared that Christ Jesus was

[1] *Supra* pp. 23 and 24.

'equal to God,' and that because of His voluntary humiliation and obedience unto death, God 'hath highly exalted Him, and given Him a name which is above every name: that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow.'

The Christological passages in the Epistles to the Ephesians and Colossians, which state that all things were made by Him and in Him hold together, while showing the influence of Philo, are in keeping with the above quotation; and finally all is clenched in a phrase of the Epistle to the Romans, where St Paul declares of Christ that He is 'over all, God blessed for ever.'[1]

## III

The last quotation from St Paul has been much controverted, and it is easy to give it a slight turn which would make God and not Christ the subject of the last predicate. But even if St Paul never made the direct statement that Christ is God, he certainly believed in a supernatural eternal Christ, and if this eternal Christ is not God, then his system is reduced to an awkward dualism of two Gods involving a third, which could never have occurred to a Jew brought up in the strictest monotheism.

St Paul's Christology is brought to its logical conclusion in the Fourth Gospel.

It is necessary to note that the way for the Fourth Gospel was prepared by the Platonic speculations of the Alexandrian Jew Philo. Philo had adapted Platonism in so far as it lent itself as a mode or vesture for his Judaism. The Fourth Evangelist had to grapple with the same problem when, Christianity having spread beyond the Palestinian border, it became necessary to express it in modes of thought that a Greek would understand. The Christ idea was essentially Hebrew. Was there an essentially Greek idea that could serve as an exact equivalent? Philo had borrowed the Greek Logos and used it in a way to express the cosmical process little short of the Christology of St Paul; and St John, inspired to take the hint, took the Logos also as a marvellously close translation of the Hebrew Christ to explain the nature of Jesus.

This surely was the most fruitful adaptation ever made in the interests of Christianity. It follows that if Jesus is the Christ, and the Christ is the Word, and the Word is God,

[1] Rom. ix. 5.

therefore Jesus is God. St John, who expresses the Church consciousness towards the end of the first century, accepted the full consequences, and having started his Gospel with the emphatic declaration that the Word is God, proceeded to state that the Word became flesh, and to give his account of Jesus in the light of this wonderful conception.

It is strange to contemplate the history of the two words Christ and Logos. The Hebrew and the Greek have been pitted against each other as for ever irreconcilable. The Greek still stands for what is beautiful and glad, the Hebrew for a passion after righteousness which reveals sin and saddens the sinner. The Greek, with the creative desire to express his teeming thought, not only brought the plastic arts to consummate perfection, but learned the value and beauty of words as the exact expression of his subtlest thought. Hence when his philosophy was matured he thought of God as the Creative Thinker, and the beautiful universe as the expression of this thought brought into being through His creative Word, and thus the Greek's religion, philosophy, and art were one.

The Hebrew, suffering in exile, and from his consciousness of sin, thought of the Christ as the Deliverer, the Holy One, the Righteous One, the Anointed One; and when at last Jesus gathered up into one image the fragments of the Hebrew Christ, and stamped it with His own likeness, men came to see in Him not only the Atoner and Fulfiller of all righteousness, but actually the Fulfiller also of all that was best in the Greek genius. There is but one conclusion, that what was working through the far different geniuses of the Greek and Hebrew peoples was the same Spirit of God, and when the Greek genius culminated in the Logos, and the Hebrew in the Christ, the Logos became the best mode of explaining to a Greek what the Hebrew meant by the Christ. If Jesus had been born a Greek He would have found the Logos ready at hand to express Himself, and though it would have expressed His divinity, yet it would not have included the thought of the Suffering Servant of Jehovah. By being born a Jew He could grapple with sin which spoilt man's joy, and the transition to the Greek Logos, if not made by Himself, could be made by the sure instinct of His Church whenever the need should arise.

Yet when we say that Jesus is the Christ, and the Christ is the Word, and the Word is God, and therefore Jesus is God, the logic may be sound but the equations are not absolute. We have seen that the Christ idea was the best Jesus found

as His mode of self-expression. It was a workable but not a perfect clothing of His self-consciousness ; and it follows that whereas Jesus was the name of an historical person, the Christ is His symbolical designation. Again, the Word is not an absolute equivalent for the Christ, but as nearly as possible a corresponding symbol. Finally, the word God has not meant invariably the same thing. Jesus is the same 'yesterday, to-day, and for ever,' and so of necessity is God, but man's conception of Him has changed with the changing ages. Our ideas of God come to us through symbols, and apart from the highest symbol, man, it is doubtful whether we could have any conception of Him at all except as blind force ; and therefore when we make the seemingly simple statement that Jesus is God, we make in fact an extraordinary complex statement which requires endless explanation ; and while all Christians would assent to its truth, yet we must add that its truth is better understood symbolically than in the absolute letter.

So long as we continue to assert that Jesus is God, we must be continually examining our conception of Jesus' character, lest by forming a wrong image of Him we form a wrong image of God.

We have already seen that intellectually Jesus hardly modified the apocalyptic Christ, but actually He gave a spiritual conception to it by his character.

At first sight the apocalpytic Christ appears far removed from the picture of Jesus in the Gospels. He is a Christ of terrible anger, wrath, and vengeance. He appears in St Paul's letter to the Thessalonians opposed to anti-Christ, and striking terror into those who are not elect. He inspired the Apocalypse of St John, which while rising to passages of gorgeous description and containing others of extreme tenderness, yet holds much of the wrathful Christ taking vengeance on His enemies, and thus satisfying the Saints under the Altar who had cried, 'How long, O Lord, holy and true, dost thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth?' It seems impossible to reconcile such an avenging Christ with the Jesus who preached non-resistance to evil, and on the cross cried to the Father to forgive those who were shedding His blood.

Yet the discrepancy is not in the Gospels, but arises from our reading them with preconceived sentimental notions of Jesus. There He is shown as marvellously tender to sinners who have lost their way, and terribly angry with religious Pharisees

who have become blind to their true condition. He says stern things in not a few of his parables. 'Then said the king to the servants, Bind him hand and foot, and take him away, and cast him into outer darkness; there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.'[1] 'But those mine enemies, which would not that I should reign over them, bring hither, and slay them before me.'[2]

To-day we need to be reminded of the austere side of Jesus' character and teaching. Love that cannot be angry is amiable weakness. Forgiveness that does not demand the condition of penitence is injustice. Hence we conclude that the apocalyptic Christ, so unacceptable to the modern mind, rightly retained His place in the teaching of St Paul and St John.

But there were sides of the apocalyptic teaching that Jesus Himself rejected. It was customary to think of God as the author of war, plague, famine, sickness, disease, and death. Jesus traced these things to an evil agency. When we do the same we shall reach St John's sublime truth, that God is love. We shall see Him no longer as the author of our ills, but as their inveterate enemy. When we seek to make practical application of our faith, whether for our individual or corporate needs, we shall begin by clearing our conception of God through a clearer vision of Jesus Christ, and the moment we see and believe in God as He is, we shall enter on the triumphant life in which sin, sickness, and death flee from before His Face, and we become co-workers with Him in the redemption of the world.

## IV

As Christology passes beyond the New Testament into the controversies of the early Church it loses much of its fresh interest, and becomes the subject for a long period of barren speculation. It is difficult to believe that any but an archaic mind can be induced to wade through the history of this period when the living present is so full of overwhelming interest.

Yet it is necessary that some one should not be quite forgetful of the old heresies, for most of them come back again, and each religious cult that hovers into vogue for its little day proves to be but an old heresy in a new dress; and a little knowledge would prevent the deplorable waste

[1] Matt. xxii. 13. [2] Luke xix. 27.

of time caused by living again through the old controversies and coming again to the old conclusions, when we ought to be pressing forward to grapple with those new problems that cry for a solution.

The old heretics, Valentinus, Marcion, Arius, Apollinaris, Eutyches, Nestorius, covered such a wide field of mystical, rational, and metaphysical speculation that it is impossible to suppose that any one to-day can concoct a new theory on the nature of Christ. Gnosticism lives again in theosophy and Christian science ; Arianism in unitarianism ; Apollinarianism, Eutychianism, Nestorianism, can be detected in the writings of those who are ardent advocates of what, by a quaint anachronism, is called the *New* Theology.

Those who have been grounded on the Christian Creeds can see at once how faithfully they are built up on the New Testament ; but the New Testament was not so clear as to leave no reasonable ground for controversy, and by allowing the possibility of a variety of interpretations of Christ's nature to arise, it became necessary for the Church to define accurately her own position, and to perfect that vesture which Jesus had found scarcely adequate for His self-consciousness.

The progressive Church statements are to be found in the three great Creeds of Christendom. The first, the Apostles', which speaks of Jesus Christ as the 'only Son' of God, 'our Lord,' and as coming again 'to judge the quick and the dead,' is in the apocalyptic language which was Jesus' own ; the Nicene was an answer to Arianism and semi-Arianism. Its statements that Jesus Christ was 'the only begotten Son of God, Begotten of His Father before all worlds, God of God, Light of Light, Very God of Very God, Begotten, not made, Being of one substance with the Father, By whom all things were made,' were built up on the statements implicit in the Synoptic Gospels and explicit in the Fourth. The Athanasian Creed was the final answer to many heresies that arose from the ever new difficulty of relating Jesus' humanity with His divinity. Its language must strike a modern mind as highly metaphysical and abstruse, but it is astonishing how few metaphysical words it uses that are not already in the New Testament ; and it is impossible to conceive that any finer or more exact formula can ever be drawn up of what is implied in Jesus' claim to be the Christ.

The Creeds, then, are entirely supported by the New Testament taken as a whole. The only question for us is whether they are still supported after the New Testament has been

vigorously pruned by the critics' knife. To this question we can answer an emphatic Yes. The historical nucleus presents us with Jesus working from the beginning of His ministry through the Christ-mode. When Christianity passed into Greek hands the Fourth Evangelist used the word Logos as the Greek equivalent of the Hebrew Christ, and identified the Logos with God. Beyond that the Creeds do not and cannot go; but necessarily such astounding statements gave rise to endless questioning, and the Creeds give probably the best and most precise answer that can ever be given.

Are the Creeds literal or symbolical?

No one to-day takes the whole Creed literally, as, for example, the statements that Jesus Christ 'sat down on the right hand of God,' that He *descended* and *ascended*, or the phrase that he was '*conceived* by the Holy Ghost.' Our 'lamentable' differences arise because we cannot agree where to draw the line between what is literal and what is symbolical. To many of us it seems that there is no need to draw any line at all. The Apostles' Creed gains its unity only from its symbolical value, and not until we have grasped it as a symbolical whole are we free to discover what parts are also historical. Here we are concerned with what it says about Jesus Christ, and we gather that He was an historical Person, but that who He was and His unique relation to God can be conveyed to us only through historical symbols.

We have seen that even the New Testament took us into the realm of symbol. If we admit that Jesus' appropriation of the Christ symbol was the best available explanation of His unique self-consciousness, then we cannot stop short of the great symbolical statements of the Nicene Creed, that He was 'God of God,' 'Light of Light,' 'Very God of very God.'

## V

The Christ of experience has been the same in all ages. Religion is no longer a matter of opinion to those who know Christ, for they are able to say, 'We speak that we do know, and testify that we have seen.'[1] Any one can gather a vast amount of learning about the modes and wrappings of religion, and if he have genius he may write beautiful stories with Christ for his hero; but all this seems utterly beside the mark to the one who has come into the rich inheritance of Christian

[1] John iii. 11.

experience, and is discovering more and more of its untold wealth every day that he lives.

St Paul gives a wonderfully full testimony of what Christ had been to him through many years of a strenuous and tumultuous life ; but the author of the Fourth Gospel gives even a deeper testimony, for he has merged his own experience so intimately into that of the Christ that he is able to write of an experience which transcends that of any individual, and can be realised only by the whole Church.

St John arranged the chronology of his Gospel so as to illustrate, in order, every phase of Christian experience. He begins by showing how one by one men come to Jesus, drawn to Him directly, or through the invitation of a brother. As they abide with Him for a day, they unconsciously catch His Spirit, and through the Spirit's teaching learn to see in Jesus the Christ.[1] He in His turn comes to them, not only in their sorrows, but in their human joys and festivities, turning the water of their lives into wine, and enabling them to see that this new richness flows from the hidden glory to which He calls them.[2]

The presence of Jesus evoking their faith in Him as the Christ, brings to them the consciousness that they have already been born again into the eternal life of the Kingdom of God.[3] There is opened up within them a well of water quenching the deep thirst which all other things have failed to satisfy.[4] Eternal life, regarded in apocalypse as beginning on the future resurrection day, becomes not only a present possession, but by its own law of life ensures to them their own ultimate resurrection and ascension.[5] But the new divine man requires spiritual food, and the Christ, who has poured out His life for His own, comes to them again, carrying in His hands bread and wine, by which they can be fed with the spiritual food of His Body and Blood. Thus the hunger of the soul is satisfied as well as its thirst, and it receives the sacramental assurance that its hunger and thirst can be met for evermore.[6]

The recipients of the divine life are not to live to themselves, but to find a yet deeper life in service, and to this end they are to go forward to a complete apprehension of Christ, that they may become channels for rivers of living water to flow through to needy souls.[7]

[1] John i. [2] John ii. [3] John iii.
[4] John iv. [5] John v. [6] John vi.
[7] John vii.

The possession of eternal life brings with it the realisation of Sonship; and as the filial soul listens to the words of truth, and continues in them, it is found that little by little the truth breaks the fetters of sin, disease, circumstance, and heredity, and leads the soul into the freedom of a loved Son in the Father's house.[1]

Truth brings light, which opens the eyes of those who are born blind, and enables them to discern all things by the simple act of seeing, although they can give no other account of their new sight, except that they know that whereas they were born blind, now they see.[2]

Those who have learnt for themselves to see the Christ and to hear His voice are constrained to follow Him 'as the water follows the moon, silently, with fluid steps anywhere around the globe.' They find that they have entered through Him as through a door into the sheep-fold, and He Himself has become the shepherd.[3] With passionate obedience they follow His beckoning. Through Him they reach forward to grasp the things of the future, making them present in their experience. They do not talk of a future resurrection day, for the Christ within *is* the resurrection and the life, and immortality is no longer an uncertain guess of the rational mind, but a certainty of the perceiving spirit.[4] They now catch a glimpse of their predestined glory, but at the same moment they are reminded that the Christ in the flesh reached His glory only by the path-way of death. He, like a corn of wheat, fell into the ground and died,[5] and thus brought forth fruit a thousandfold in His own members. But the law of life through death governs the fruit too, and unless the fruit is to be preserved in cultured barren wastefulness, it must die to liberate its seed; and so when Christian souls are crucified, dead, and buried with Christ, they enter into a new life of lowly service ready for the humblest office, even to the washing of the brethren's feet.[6] Their union with Christ is now so intimate that they lie like the beloved disciple on the Master's bosom, and there catch deeper intimations of His will and purpose. But service, and not ecstasy, is their portion here, and to this end they receive the great gift of the Holy Spirit, who cleanses their hearts, clears their vision even of things to come, testifies to Jesus, and endues them with great power.[7] Christ's members, like living

[1] John viii [2] John ix. [3] John x.
[4] John xi. [5] John xii. [6] John xiii.
[7] John xiv.

branches of the True Vine, bear fruit, and after purging more fruit, and as they press on, not only to the knowledge of the indwelling Christ, but to the consummation of the divine life in Him, they bring forth much fruit, and fruit that remains in the eternal store-house of heaven.[1] There follows the vision of ineffable union[2] when the many members are as one man in Christ Jesus, and with this blessed vision, Christ's own have triumphed over death, and now walk in fellowship with the ascended Lord, only waiting for His final call to go to the place that He has prepared for them in heaven.

The Christ of experience is the same to-day as set forth in the inspired pages of St John's Gospel. In its initial stage the experience scarcely varies, whether among evangelicals, Anglo-catholics, or Roman catholics. The supreme moment for Peter was when he realised that Jesus was the Christ, the Son of the living God; for not only was the lesson taught him directly by the Father, but it started him on the upward path of eternal life. It was the same with all the disciples. Here in the Messianic consciousness of Jesus, and its apprehension by His disciples, we are to look for the rock foundation on which the whole superstructure of Christianity rests. In the light cast by this glowing conviction the disciples read the past, and reached forward to the future, and it is in the same light and with the same conviction that we can unite our Christianity to-day with theirs of yesterday, and go forward with united wills to create a new earth.

It is true that many stop short soon after their first apprehension of Christ, and their lives dwindle to an arid and bigoted individualism; but those who press on to the old catholic doctrine of sanctity will find every word of St John's Gospel repeat itself in their experience, and this being the experience of Christendom in all ages we may trust it, and working from it go forward to face the problems of to-day, as confidently as they have been faced in the past.

Finally, the Christ of experience is the creation of the Jesus of history, and therefore His astounding claim to be the Christ has received the accumulative corroboration of two thousand years.

[1] John xv. [2] John xvii.

# CHAPTER VIII

## THE ATONEMENT

### I

THE death of Jesus was His one supreme, impulsive, self-revealing act. It was the outcome of every part of His manifold being working in perfect and instinctive unison. Like the act of seeing to one who has eyes, it was elemental, simple, direct ; and also like seeing, it admits of endless explanations to those who ask the question, How ?

Moses, carrying in his heart a stiff-necked and exasperating people, cried in the impetuosity of his love that his name might be blotted out of the book of life rather than that they should perish.[1]

St Paul, never forgetting that he was of the same blood with the same people, was willing to be accursed from Christ if only they might be saved.[2]

St Catherine of Siena, saddened by the great Italian schism, prayed to suffer if the schism might be healed ; and the spirit of the schism, passing on to her spirit, crushed her to death in her self-immolation.

These at once strike us as sublime instances of heroic love, and we do not ask how those lofty spirits could reasonably perish that others might be saved.

It were well if we could view the self-oblation of Jesus simply too, and in our own urgent need find at the Cross that our burden is lifted ; but since we are not simple and guileless, and can only hope to reach simplicity after traversing many intricate ways, we are obliged to ask how the death of Jesus could make an atonement for sin, and we cannot rest until we get some sort of rational explanation.

Jesus stood at the dawn of a new age. As such He was a pioneer, and every pioneer is a rebel. There are two kinds

[1] Exodus xxxii. 32. [2] Romans ix. 3.

of rebellion, one against the dying or dead past, which is the mark of the prophet ; the other against the voice of the Living God, which is the sin against the Holy Ghost.

This law obtains in every department of life. The highest poet, artist, or musician begins by doing supremely well what has already been done in the past, and wins popularity ; but when he goes on to transcend the past, and strikes a new pathway, and illumines henceforth a new tract of the human spirit, he is resisted, maligned, and made to endure some refined and civilised form of slow martyrdom. The opposition tests him, and if he is really great and not a mere sky-rocket, he steadily keeps open the new tract, into which a host of followers rush in the next generation.

Any form of martyrdom like chastening is grievous while it lasts, yet afterwards it yields peaceable fruit ; but the form of opposition aroused by the spiritual reformer when he goes among religious people is the most cruel and relentless of all. It is the struggle of light against darkness, spirit against matter, life against religion.

Jesus became fully aware of the issues of His own life at the time of John the Baptist's death, and He knew that the great choice between two courses lay before Him—either to withdraw from His public life, which would make Him guilty of the terrible sin of refusing to follow His highest vision, or to go forward and accept in His own Person a repetition of the fate of the prophets. Without a moment's hesitation Jesus went forward, and it only remained for Him to make up His mind in what light He should regard His death.

Jesus' thought of His death is to be interpreted in the light of His thought of the Kingdom.

With a mighty longing for the Kingdom to come Jesus had done everything in His power to bring it. He had preached the Gospel in the great old cities, and prepared His disciples to do the same, so that every one throughout the land might hear the call to repentance and faith, and by their response be ready to enter into the Kingdom at its manifestation. After this extensive mission was over, Jesus was compelled reluctantly to accept the fact that the people as a whole had not repented. Their sin was not that they refused to turn from foolish delinquencies which a great God might well overlook, but that a dazzling light had shone upon them, and they had refused the light, shutting their eyes, and also shutting the door by which Jesus might have reached them.

How was Jesus to win the perverted wills of sinners and turn them into one direction towards God ?

There was no way but to accept willingly the death that His obedience to the Spirit of life would surely bring, and to make His self-offering a willing sacrifice for the sins of the whole world. Then, when He was lifted up like the brazen serpent in the wilderness, and men perceived that His blood was the outward and visible sign of a love stronger than death for their blinded souls, their whole and undivided wills would by a glad surrender be given to God, and that would bring the Kingdom.

Jesus did not separate Himself in thought from the glorious company of the faithful dead who had come to an untimely end, because they had been faithful in their generation. His blood added to theirs should cause the cup of righteousness to overflow. Again, the issues narrowed to a choice between two courses—either, in His conflict with the religious party, to borrow their weapons, and give railing for railing, reviling for reviling, denunciation for persecution, and thus fill the cup with the blood of iniquity, or, rising far above His murderers, to make the blood in the cup, not the symbol of murder that cries for vengeance, but of obedience that cries for pardon and the Kingdom to come.

## II

St Paul approached the death of Jesus Christ from his urgent sense of need. Gamaliel's most brilliant pupil, of whom great things were expected, he threw himself with vehement zeal and energy into the defence of the old religion against the new heresy of Christianity. Deep within him was an uneasy consciousness that he was unable to obey the law of righteousness that his conscience approved ; and even the loud approbation that his efforts to crush the new sect called forth was powerless to silence the still small voice of his spirit.

His persecution of the Christians brought him into close contact with men who bore themselves magnificently when put to the supreme test, and in particular with Stephen, who manifested a loving power and steadfastness such as Judaism had ceased to inspire in its adherents. Hence St Paul, with all his high principles and loyalty to the past, was driven against his will to see that life, power, victory, and joy lay with the Christians, and that his adherence to a dying cause had already turned him into a relentless and cruel bigot. When, at last, burdened

and despairing with the grim consciousness of sin, he beheld in faith Jesus Christ crucified, he suddenly understood the meaning of that death, and with a passionate yielding of his whole being to Christ he passed out of the clutch of a dying Pharisaism, and took hold of the Spirit of life, which united him for ever with Christ. It was his sense of sin, then, and his experience that it was purged as he apprehended the crucified Christ, that decided his particular view and explanation of the Atonement.

What is sin?

St Paul let drop one definition—Whatsoever is not of faith is sin. Taking this with the whole argument of the Epistle to the Romans we gather that faith and obedience constitute righteousness and life, and that unfaith and disobedience are the essence of sin and death. The word to 'sin' means to miss the mark. Hence only the man who obeys the will of God hits the mark that God intended in His creation.

What, then, is the will of God?

Saul of Tarsus thought he was doing the will of God when he was persecuting Christians. St Paul knew afterwards that he was not doing God's will until he became Christ's bond-servant. For the will of God is manifested in the Spirit of Life working in the present, and thus when St Paul took hold of Christ, he took hold of life, which freed him from the law of sin and death, made him more than conqueror, and subjected him in turn to the persecution of dying or dead people, like his Master, but made him accept it joyfully that he might fill up that which was 'behind of the afflictions of Christ for His body's sake, which is the Church.'[1]

St Paul's teaching of the Church enabled him to work another truth, which nowadays is called solidarity, and of which he had a remarkably tenacious grasp. Since God has made of one blood all nations of the earth, it follows that we are all members one of another, and are knit together by a thousand invisible threads. St Paul, baptised into the Church, perceived that the members of Christ's body are also knit together by the visible bonds of the sacraments. Hence when he pressed on to inquire how the objective facts of Christ's death, burial, resurrection, and ascension could become fruits of experience in the hearts of individual believers, his own experience taught him that, lest they be left to wither in isolation, they must be grafted by baptism into the body of Christ in order that the

[1] Col. i. 24.

life of Christ might flow richly into them and make them fruitful. Baptism by immersion was a vivid symbol of regeneration, for going down into the waters was a going down into death, and rising from the waters was an emerging into life, and baptism was thus an instrument by which man was united to the crucified and risen Christ, and received both the atonement and the resurrection.

St Paul is the favourite of those who state the atonement in terms of substitution. Yet he is in reality far removed from the substitutionary theory. If Christ died instead of sinners, it would follow that He rose instead of them too, and they would be yet in their sins. St Paul believed that Christ died and rose again in order that sinners might in Him die and rise into newness of life, and therefore union with Christ is the essence of his explanation of how the atonement frees man from sin.

Side by side with St Paul's conception of the Atonement as a vital process are vestiges of a doctrine that he inherited not from Christ but from the Old Testament. He writes to the Romans of Christ being 'set forth by God to be a propitiation through faith in His blood,' so that God's justice being satisfied His mercy is free to forgive the sinner.[1] This notion, in keeping with traditional morality, was afterwards greatly developed by scholastic theologians, and is still a commonplace on 'Revival' platforms. It has too often been misunderstood. It has enabled sinners to rest in a doctrine of atonement repudiated by Christ, and to become the most bitter persecutors of those who understand the Atonement as a living process, not only of the Christ, but of all who reach forward to the creation of a new age. Yet rightly understood it is of extreme importance.

There are one or two forensic words[2] that have slipped into St Paul's doctrine of justification, but since these are easily swamped by his profound understanding of a justification resting on a living foundation of imparted righteousness it need not detain us here, and we can pass on to the Atonement as interpreted in the Epistle to the Hebrews.

[1] Rom. iii. 25, 26.

[2] As δικαίωσις which he uses only twice, Rom. iv. 25 and v. 18, his usual word being δικαιοσύνη. Since there is only one verbal form for them both we are justified in understanding δικαιόω to mean, to make righteous, rather than, to reckon righteous. However, we need not object to δικαίωσις, or λογιζομαι which has a forensic sound, for God does not reckon a man righteous who is not first made righteous by faith.

## III

The author of the Epistle to the Hebrews, as we have already seen, was preoccupied with the thought of Jesus as a priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec. It is impossible to think of a priest without one's thought immediately running on to the associated notions of sin, sacrifice, altar, and intercession. The author deals with all these, but when he views the death of Jesus on the cross as the sacrifice that makes atonement for sin, he is determined to see it, not as an isolated event in time, but rather as a manifestation in time of what is a real process in eternity.

The author was converted to Christianity, not from the strictest and most orthodox Judaism, but from Judaism liberalised by Philo. Hence his original view of the Levitical priesthood with its elaborate Temple worship and ritual, and perpetual slaughter of innocent victims, enabled him to interpret these things as types, shadows, examples, figures, of things which are eternal in the heavens, and as to come only in so far as faith can give substance to what is invisible.

Hence it was his habit of mind to project his thought into eternity, and strive to see all things *sub specie aeternitatis*. When he became a Christian the same mental need asserted itself in regard to Jesus and the great acts of His life, and it was wonderfully met by the fact that Jesus' claim to Messiahship included a claim to pre-existence. The author was thus led by his mental antecedents to seize spontaneously the idea of Jesus as the eternal Son of God, and one more mental step enabled him to see the eternal Son offering Hinself in love to the eternal Father, and living in eternity by the law of His self-oblation. Having gained a clear vision of the Son in eternity, he proceeded to the vision of Jesus as the Son taking on Him, not the nature of angels, but the flesh and blood of the seed of Abraham. This coming in the flesh in no wise broke the eternal self-oblation of the Son, rather He took up into His passionate self-donation the whole human race, and when His life of obedience brought Him through the agony of Gethsemane to the bitterness of the cross, His love was mighty enough to accept the contradiction of sinners and His manifold sufferings, and to inspire Him to make, in time, a perfect, impulsive offering of Himself and those whom He called His brothers to God in obedience to the law of God

that was written in His heart. Necessarily death cannot be more than the momentary throb of time in the process of eternity ; and the Son, passing with unfaltering step through its portal, is lifted with that human nature, which is forever His, to His Father's right hand, thenceforth waiting till His enemies have yielded to His love, and gaining the authority and power to help all those who call upon His name.

The Levitical law demanded a victim without blemish. Was Jesus without sin ? Judged by any standard of the past He must be reckoned a sinner ; but when the form of the question is changed, and we ask, Was Jesus always obedient to the law of life and of God written in His heart, we not only shout with the redeemed in all ages, Yes, but we add that through faith in Jesus, our great High Priest, we are able to take hold of the same great law of life that pulsed in Him, and because it is law of our inner spirits, we too are able to go forward impulsively and delightedly doing the will of God which is written in our hearts, and rushing into the pleasant land that He won for us, when with a valiant spirit He pressed through the armies of those who were arrayed against Him, and took possession by right of His sovereign will.

Even the Fourth Gospel can add but little to this sublime conception of atonement. Still, it enables us to complete our vision of the Son in eternity by its more explicit doctrine of the Trinity. We see how the eternal self-offering of the Son to the Father is maintained in the unity of the self-offering of the Holy Spirit. The three Persons through love flow into each other, while yet there is an eternal distinction between each. Thus we glimpse a unity at the root of all things without sacrificing our need for the many. This unity can be maintained for ever, because He who is the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world was also the Lamb slain before the foundation of the world.

## IV

The theology of the Atonement developed side by side with that of the Incarnation. The Incarnation is associated with the name of St Athanasius, since it was he, in his fight against the Arian world, who defined it in the fourth century in accordance with Church tradition. The atonement was the subject of St Anselm's famous book, *Cur Deus Homo*, at the end of the eleventh century, which could never have been

written had not St Anselm sat on the shoulders of his illustrious predecessor.

St Anselm's scheme of the Atonement reaches back to the creation of the angels, and the subsequent gap left in the ranks of heaven when a large number of them fell. God's purpose in the creation of man was to fill up the gap, and complete the mystical number on which He had determined from eternity. The first man and woman unhappily were disobedient, Eve sinning first, and she in her turn leading Adam into disobedience. Eve carried in her womb the whole human race, and thus her fall involved the fall of mankind. Man fallen is both sinful and helpless, and however sorry he may be for his sin, yet until he pays his infinite debt to God he cannot be forgiven, and must perish everlastingly in the penal flames of hell.

But God's original purpose in creation cannot be frustrated, and seeing that it was impossible for man to make satisfaction for his sin, He sent His only begotten Son to take man's nature on Himself, that He as Man and God might by His death pay man's debt, and make the needful satisfaction for his sin. God had employed three different methods for producing a human being. There was the ordinary way of generation with two parents. Adam was created without parents ; Eve was created out of Adam ; and therefore it was fitting that since sin came into the world through the disobedience of the Virgin Eve, (Eve's marriage with Adam was not consummated till after the fall,) that the Saviour should be born from the Virgin Mary, who was first cleansed by her Saviour in order that He might not inherit Adam's sin. Thus equipped He became obedient unto death, offering Himself voluntarily for the sins of the whole world. God can accept the offering of the sinless victim, and His eternal justice being at last satisfied and vindicated, His mercy is free to flow forth to sinners who repent and believe in Jesus, and who through the rite of Holy Baptism are grafted into the Body of Christ, in Him attaining to holiness, and finally made fit to take the place in heaven left vacant by the fallen angels.

St Anselm's scheme is whole and its parts coherent. But, alas ! time has dealt relentlessly with the parts. The angel theory has long been obsolete, and to-day Adam and Eve are regarded as mythical, the fall as defined by the Roman or Anglican Church untenable. Hence the whole scheme goes to pieces, and one is left groping for any valuable fragments that may be saved from the wreckage.

One large chunk remains for examination—St Anselm's persistent asseveration for the need of satisfaction being made for man's sin.

God, he insists, cannot forgive man until a spontaneous satisfaction has been made for his sin, for it would be unjust to the righteous, unjust to the upright angels with whom redeemed men are to take their place, and above all it would be contrary to God's justice, which cannot permit Him to clear the guilty.

St Anselm, like a good catholic, appeals to the Holy Scriptures to support his statements.[1] But we must keep in mind that at his time, as also to-day in the Roman Catholic Church, the Bible was regarded as plenarily inspired, and any one, like Abelard, who questioned the equal inspiration of all its books was condemned as a heretic. If St Paul made a statement that seemed to contradict a statement of Christ, then the contradiction had to be explained away, since St Paul's words and Christ's words were equally the word of God, in which there could be no contradiction.

The scriptural foundation for St Anselm's doctrine of 'satisfaction' is mainly to be found in St Paul's Epistle to the Romans, but there is not a vestige of it in the teaching of Jesus.

Jesus taught that man must forgive his brother until seventy times seven if he repented. He was to demand no other satisfaction. In the parable of the king whose servant owed him ten thousand talents, when he was unable to pay, he prayed him to have patience, and he would pay him all. And the lord was moved with compassion, and frankly forgave him his debt. The same servant went out, and finding a fellow-servant who owed him only an hundred pence, he took him by the throat and refused to forgive him his debt until he had made satisfaction. The satisfaction not forthcoming, he cast him into prison. Afterwards, when his lord, learning what had happened, delivered him to the tormentors until he should pay all that was due unto him, the king was not demanding penal satisfaction, but illustrating the truth that even God cannot forgive the debtor who refuses to forgive his fellow.[2]

In the parable of the Prodigal Son, the righteous brother is angry because the father runs to forgive his son without first

[1] *Cur Deus Homo*, Bk. 1, Chap. xviii.
[2] Matt. xviii. 21 *et seq.*

demanding satisfaction. And no doubt if the ninety-nine sheep could have said more than Ba-a they would have complained bitterly at so much tenderness being shown to the one that went astray in the wilderness.

These parables arose out of Jesus' experience with the religious Pharisees and with sinners. Again and again He had heard the righteous murmur at His clemency to sinners ; and always He vindicated the sinner against the righteous, because He found that He could teach the sinner while He could do nothing with the religiously righteous whatever.

Jesus scarcely noticed then the traditional moral law, and launched into the world a new and original doctrine ; but St Paul reverted to the old tradition, and this has hindered, for two thousand years, the full acceptance of Christ's teaching in Christendom. For not only has St Paul's penal doctrine obtained in the theology of the Church, but it has been the scriptural and Church justification for all the penal elements in our criminal law. If the Gospel of the Kingdom is to be proclaimed again to-day, then we must get back to Christ's revolutionary teaching of forgiveness, and if it is to be put into practice, it will involve drastic changes in the way the State carries on its business.

We may ask, Is there any sense in which the sinner makes satisfaction for his sin, and Jesus for the sinner ? Yes. The repenting sinner has to walk through a thorny wilderness in his way back to God. He is often parched with thirst, and his feet are so torn, that one would suppose that the sorrows of the repenting sinner would satisfy even the righteous. For the sinner learns by bitter experience that though he is forgiven he does not escape the consequences of his past deeds, which may still work incalculable harm in other lives with a persistency that wrings his renewed and tender conscience. In this way he is fearfully punished, and satisfies the law of righteousness. When the yearning love of the Christ drew Him into the toils of our nature, He too was constrained to pass through the wilderness, and to sink into the valley of the shadow of death. He had done no wrong, neither was guile found in His mouth, yet we know that not only His Feet, but His hands and His Head and His Side were torn ; but by pouring out His soul unto death and passing triumphantly into heaven, He made it possible for the sinning, repenting, suffering soul to take hold of Him, and to be united with Him in His eternal victory.

We can, then, keep the ideas of satisfaction and propitiation

so long as we see in them not the extrinsic and penal demand of a wrathful God, but the intrinsic vindication of God's eternal law of righteousness.

## V

All things considered, we are compelled to agree with Abelard that St Anselm was not satisfactory, and we know now better than he, perhaps, the reason why.

St Anselm was a great representative of the scholastic theology; and though scholasticism is a vague term, yet this much is clear, that the scholastics treated dogmas as absolute truths, and then proceeded to argue from them as they might from the axioms of Euclid.

St Anselm was quite aware that there were those who regarded the dogmas as representations of the truth, and not the truth itself; and he repudiated the notion because it seemed to him that unless they rested on something solid they were valueless.[1] We, of course, believe that they must rest on solid truth, but we do not believe that it is possible to find more than approximative expression of the truth, and therefore it is with extreme caution that we argue, if we argue at all, from the dogmas: rather, we feel that if dogma is in any way to be modified, or changed, or argued about, we must first gain a new vision of the truth, and then proceed to find the best dogmatic modification of it. Doubtless there is an evolution of dogma as there is of our clothes, although the evolution is strictly, not in the clothes, but in the mind that fashions them.

The broad current of scholasticism, represented in catholicism by St Anselm, and in Judaism by Maimonides, ran its steady course to St Thomas Aquinas in the thirteenth century.

In the sixteenth century the Reformation struck a mortal blow at medievalism, and old Time stirred himself for a mighty effort to create the new spirit which since then has begun to articulate in Spinoza, Blake, Goethe, and a host of moderns in their wake; but it is only very slowly penetrating the Church, and except in the somewhat abortive attempts of modernism, there is not yet much to show what the Church can do when she is completely awake to the modern situation.

The new spirit has manifested itself already in our changed way of looking at personality, free-will, and conscience.

[1] *Cur Deus Homo.*, Chap. iv.

Whereas the schoolmen regarded these as fixtures, affected by sin, but not greatly fluctuating, we now see that all these are in the making, and that man's impotence arises from the fact that his will is not yet free, his conscience not yet fully illumined, and his personality little more than in embryo. It is not an accident but of the essence of these things that they should fluctuate, for it is not until our conscience flows into the cosmic consciousness, our divided wills into the divine will, and our personality into God and into our brothers, that we can be reckoned full and differentiated men.

Jesus was perfect Man because His conscience was wholly light, and He had always the power to carry through what He willed ; and He was perfect Saviour because being a completed Person, and personality being fluxual, He could flow into other thin and wasted lives, renew them in His richness, and carry them on His strong current into the haven where they would be. So soon as His personality touches a sinner, it quickens him into the redemptive life ; and as the life deepens, the will is freed, the conscience informed, and the personality made.

We call this mode of regarding personality a result of the new spirit ; but we must not imagine that it is more than partly new. It is new in Europe, which, inheriting its methods of thinking from Greece, is as full of rigid walls and partitions as an ancient Grecian city ; but in Asia it is as old as the primeval forests of India,[1] and its emergence into modern western thought is the happy sign that we are beginning to awake to the riches of the East. When again wise men from the East bring their offerings of gold and frankincense and myrrh, and lay them at the feet of Christ, then we shall have a Christianity that will conquer the world.

It may be matter of surprise that this rich view of personality had all the while been lying intact in the Gospels and St Paul's Epistles.

Jesus never thought of Himself as an isolated unit. He was united to His own not only by the bonds of love, but also by the solidarity of the human race ; and when, like Jacob, He wrestled through the dark night of man's perverted and guileful nature, He did not say, like Jacob, I will not let Thee go except Thou bless me, but, I will not let Thee go except Thou bless them, and He believed (stupendous thought !) that He could carry through the whole world by the sheer force of His

[1] These similes are taken from Tagore's *Sadhana*.

personality, and thus vindicate His self-chosen title of the Son of Man, who is the life-giving Lord from Heaven. St Paul understood nothing less when he wrote, As in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive ;[1] and St John's Christ carries this thought to its ineffable consummation when He prays for His own 'that they all may be one ; as Thou, Father, art in me, and I in Thee, that they also may be one in us ; that the world may believe that Thou hast sent me, . . . and hast loved them, as Thou hast loved me.'[2]

This deeper conception of personality and its bearing on the Atonement has been worked out with great power and beauty by Dr Moberly in his eloquent book *Atonement and Personality* Yet portions of his theory are like the unilluminated part of the moon. The notion of Christ's vicarious penitence, which bulks largely in his argument, suggests a study-meditation of the author rather than something real in the life of Christ. Also, one feels that he never quite gets back to the mind of Jesus. Like all the *Lux Mundi* men, he makes the doctrine of the Incarnation the rock on which he builds, but many of us feel that we must, for our foundation, go behind it to the living Jesus, who declared to Peter when he confessed, Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God, that that was the rock on which His Church should be built. It is surely clear that if we stand with Peter on this rock foundation, and make it the point from which we view the later developments, the whole of Church history will fall into a different perspective, with a corresponding shifting of the lights and shades.

## VI

The death of Jesus, then, is the great historical setting of the old and ever-new truth that the one who steals live fire from heaven, and would push shivering humanity into the place that he has lighted and warmed for it, will be killed for his pains.

Further, it is evidence that if the victim of man's wrath accepts his sufferings and makes an offering of his obedience to life to the Eternal Righteousness of God, he will vindicate that righteousness, and rising again will live in the hearts of those who have understood him.

Further, if he is not merely a dull repeater of the past,

[1] 1 Cor. xv. 22. [2] John xvii. 21, 23.

or a madman, his death will close an old age, and his resurrection will start a new.

Then comes the judgment to try men and prove what manner of spirit they are of.

If when the light has arisen they hold on obstinately to the dead age, and persecute men of the new, then they declare themselves dead souls, and while they will continue to confess their venial sins which do not matter, they will never know that they are guilty of the one mortal sin of rejecting life.

If when the light shines they yield themselves to the spirit of life, and seek admittance into the growing society and body of Christ, they will be freed from the law of sin, disease, and death, and become the salt of the earth and the light of the world.

To-day we are realising more deeply the unity of life and knowledge. We no longer desire to isolate our spiritual life from our daily life and its pursuits. The pioneers in music, art, literature, are subject to the same law as was Christ the Pioneer of Life. They have to contend with those who are too stupid and ignorant to understand them : He with the religious spirit aroused to its extremest cruelty. They redeem stupidity, and adorn the next generation : He redeems religion by lifting it into life. They and He are one. When His spirit of abounding life is received, then it will be manifested in every department of man's activity, and all will be caught up into that larger march of life which is the Will of God.

# CHAPTER IX

## THE RESURRECTION AND ASCENSION

### I

Jesus' teaching is most fully expressed in the Gospel of the Kingdom and the character of the Messiah ; and while both were conveyed through apocalyptic modes of thought, they were easily and naturally translated by St John into Greek modes, which to us are more intelligible. To reject the Kingdom and the Messiahship of Jesus is to reject Jesus Himself, to accept them is to submit to Him.

The Resurrection is involved in Jesus' doctrine of the Kingdom. Necessarily it is not central. His reported sayings about it are fragmentary, and for that reason we get on to much more debatable ground.

When the stories of the Resurrection first came under the fire of criticism, they were rejected largely because, as told in the four Gospels, they were found to be hopelessly discrepant. Let us admit quite candidly that it is not possible to reconstruct the story of the Resurrection from the Gospels and the book of the Acts, and let us hasten to add that the real difficulty does not lie here. The author of the Acts gives three accounts of St Paul's conversion which do not coincide with each other, but no one concludes that therefore St Paul was never converted. St Matthew and St Luke give accounts of the Nativity of Jesus which cannot be dovetailed into each other, yet no one but a monomaniacal critic concludes that therefore Jesus was never born. If there was no other difficulty in accepting the Resurrection than the inconsistent accounts, then we might dismiss the inconsistency as negligible.

Nor is the doctrine of the physical Resurrection of Jesus to be rejected because it involves a miracle. There are two orders of miracle. The deeds of man's will, when completely freed, are miraculous, like the mighty works of Jesus ; and the breaking

of the transcendental world into the natural world involves miracle like the Virgin birth of Jesus, for it is the assertion of God's free will. And therefore those who are led by an *a priori* chain of reasoning to believe in miracles will welcome a miraculous resurrection as confirmation of their deepest intellectual convictions. But neither is the real difficulty here.

The very grave difficulty is that whatever theory one adopts to explain what happened in the tomb of Jesus carries with it corollaries that do not work out consistently in all the parts.

The bare statement of the Church's faith is summed up in the Apostles' Creed, 'I believe . . . in Jesus Christ. . . Who suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead, and buried, and the third day He rose again.'

If this is a literal statement of the truth, what follows?

There are some six or seven explanations of the Resurrection, which may be stated briefly.

The Church view is that the physical body of Jesus being spotlessly pure could not see corruption, and that it was raised, again the third day, by the almighty power of God. The corollary is that Christ is the first-fruits, and therefore, though our bodies die, yet by the almighty power of God they also will be raised again at the Last Day, when Christ comes to judge the quick and the dead.

The opposite view to this is that Jesus did not rise again, and nor shall we, immortality being a fond dream of man who has tried to lull his pain by such a hope.

Another view, which seems to be commonly held to-day, is that Jesus' physical body, being incapable of corruption, was raised up; but that ours at death, having liberated the spiritual body, goes quickly to corruption because it has clothed a creature that was essentially sinful.

Another view is that Christ rose in a spiritual body which was released at the death of His earthly body, and that this was probably taken down from the cross along with the dead bodies of the two thieves, and thrown into a ditch.

Others, shocked by this inglorious and irreverent treatment of Christ's body, believe that, owing to its purity, it rapidly disintegrated and vanished from the tomb.

The favourite modern, rational explanation set agog by Dr Paulus, and accepted by Huxley, Samuel Butler, George Moore, is that Jesus swooned on the cross, and recovered in the cool tomb.

Lastly, there are those who hold that the death of Jesus was a purely voluntary episode in the life of Him who had overcome death before He offered Himself as the Atoner, and who therefore, like Enoch and Elijah, might have passed into heaven without dying. This He realised on the Mount of Transfiguration ; but the cry of the world's sin and need brought Him down, and constrained Him to His self-immolation on the cross. Having gained the keys of life and death He resumed His body, and transmuted it finally at His Ascension. The Ascension then is the earnest of the final rapture of the saints who, at Christ's coming again, will not be unclothed by death, but clothed upon ; and in the moment when death is swallowed up of life, they will ascend to meet their Lord, and so shall they be ever with the Lord. This theory leaves uncertain whether those who died in the Lord, and come again with Him, come in their old bodies raised up ; and it leaves still more uncertain the bodily condition of those who die in sin.

There are many old gnostic theories about the body of Christ arising from an erroneous view of matter, and many modern German visionary theories, which need not detain us here.

The first of these explanations being the Church's is the most important. It is based on tradition, and on the Holy Scriptures. We may say at once that assuming that the Bible is infallible no other explanation can for one moment hold the ground against it. But it is just this assumption that the modern mind cannot make, and therefore the doctrine has to stand on its own merits.

Apart from the logical fallacy that as Christ's incorruptible body rose again so our corruptible bodies will rise again, one must inquire how the New Testament writers arrived at the conclusion that Christ's body could not and did not see corruption. We find that all the reasons were inferential. The first disciples were sure that they had seen the Lord, and therefore that His body had not returned to dust ; but to convince those who were without this bodily sight of the Lord, St Peter quoted the sixteenth Psalm, Thou wilt not leave my soul in hell ; neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption.

The Psalmist, like us all, frequently fell into the pit of corruption during the vicissitudes of his spiritual life ; but he learnt, after long experience, that though his soul was dragged

down to hell, and he seemed to be in a horrible pit, yet God always raised him up again, and pointed out to him the way of life which led to fullness of joy.

Hence criticism cannot accept St Peter's rabbinical interpretation of the Psalm, and the scriptural inference becomes invalid.

Again, it was inferred that Christ's body could not see corruption because of His sinlessness. The story of Adam and Eve was almost unanimously taken literally, and in consequence it was believed that physical death and decay, both in the human and animal world, was the result of man's sin. It was inevitable that those who believed this should extend their belief to the New Testament, and argue, with an instinct easily mistaken for sound reasoning, that since Christ was sinless, therefore not only was His death voluntary, but also His body could not see corruption. This argument is invalidated for those who cannot accept the story of Adam and Eve.

The Church doctrine of a future general resurrection is built up on a literal interpretation of the apocalyptic resurrection ; but we have already seen that if we are to understand all the apocalyptic vision literally we shall be obliged, with the exception of a small residuum of ethic, to reject Christianity altogether.

The notion of a future general resurrection involves the resurrection of our physical bodies ; and since St Paul argued that our resurrection stood or fell with the resurrection of Christ the First-fruits, the conclusion followed logically from Christ's physical resurrection. This is the authoritative teaching of the Church of Rome. St Thomas Aquinas was fully aware that bodies are continually changing, and that if all the matter that had clothed a soul in a long lifetime were gathered together, it would make a huge mass, but he maintained that the redeemed spirit required very little matter to complete its bodily perfection, and its choice was strictly selective. Such a view makes allowance, if need be, for a man's body being devoured by a cannibal, and is not at all disturbed at that prospect.

There are comparatively few, however, outside of the Roman Catholic Church, who believe that our physical bodies will in any sense be resuscitated ; and if it is sound to argue from Christ to us, and to affirm that His and our bodies are subject to the same human law and the same divine purpose, then we must make the same affirmations or the same denials

for ourselves as for Him. The Roman Catholic gives, at any rate, a perfectly consistent answer.

But those of us who believe that our mortal bodies are interpenetrated by a subtler spiritual body, which is released at death, like a chick out of its egg, do not believe in any future physical resurrection ; and therefore since working, with the Church explanation, from Christ to us breaks down, we must either work from ourselves to Him, or see whether His Resurrection and ours cannot be explained by a law of humanity which is as old as the human race.

## II

Let us get at and work from the thought of Jesus.

Jesus' belief about resurrection was inseparable from His conception of the Kingdom, and as of the Kingdom so of the Resurrection, He expressed His belief in apocalyptic modes. He perceived two aspects of the Kingdom, its present inwardness and its future outwardness, the future being the final outcome and consummation of the present. These two aspects appear in His teaching of the Resurrection.

When, arguing with the Sadducees, He quoted the words, I am the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, He added, He is not the God of the dead, but of the living ; and from these words it is clear that He believed that Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob and the faithful had already entered on the first phase of their resurrection, and, as we gather elsewhere, were waiting for the Kingdom to come before their resurrection could be consummated.

Thus there is a present inward resurrection which involves a future outward one.

Jesus Himself was conscious of living in the power of the present inward resurrection, and therefore, believing that the Kingdom was on the eve of its manifestation, He could say confidently to His disciples that if He was rejected and put to death, He should certainly rise again in the coming Kingdom. His repeated assertion of His immediate Resurrection afterwards crystallised into the still more definite assertion that He rose again the third day.

St Paul followed Jesus closely in his teaching of the two aspects of the Resurrection. In the present believers are baptised into the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ, and already walk in newness of life. In the future their present

inward resurrection becomes an outward fact at the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ.

The Christ of St John also keeps the two aspects. The first is affirmed in the forever sacred and treasured words to Martha, I am the resurrection and the life ; he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live ; and whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die. And the second is put as a consequence of the first, when Jesus said of those who, through faith in Him, had entered into everlasting life now, that He would raise them up at the last day.[1]

We shall get at the root of the matter, then, when we believe that our resurrection is both present and future, and we shall need only to discard the apocalyptic vesture of Christ and St Paul, and find some other mode of expressing the inner spirit of truth that it preserved.

Here, as elsewhere, the Fourth Gospel is our guide. There eternal life, resurrection, and judgment are shown to be present processes in the man who has been born again. But every process works to a crisis. Hence his present resurrection, judgment, and eternal life will carry him to the Last Day, when his soul and body will reach their final perfection.

What we require to know of Christ is whether He, after His death, reached perfection in all things pertaining to our human nature, soul and body.

The creeds affirm that He did, and the disciples of Jesus gave up their lives to witness to His Resurrection, amid every kind of opposition and persecution, because, as they averred, they had seen the risen Lord, and He had given them bodily assurance that He was alive.

This is the positive truth that we must hold intact.

## III

Keeping clear in our minds that Jesus Christ reached human perfection in body as in soul, we can then proceed to weigh the different theories and inquire which one of them best preserves the truth. The most extreme view that neither Christ nor we live again may be dismissed altogether. The swooning theory is the most reasonable, and while it would not negate the above positive statement, yet we have reason to believe that reason is not a safe guide when pushed out of its own proper place. On the whole, the Church doctrine,

[1] John vi. 39, 40, 44.

although involving miracle and a view of the Scriptures that criticism cannot accept, still remains the most satisfactory. Yet it is not literally true in all its parts, and therefore if we are to keep it, it can only be by taking it as a symbolical and not as a literal statement of the truth.

The transition from letter to symbol which has to be made in every age, for the history of one generation becomes a symbol in the next, will change our attitude from that of hard exclusive dogmatism to a charitable tolerance towards the many theories that may not be ours. For we have to recognise the fact that we shall never know what happened, or what a modern mind accustomed to sift evidence would have seen, during the days that followed immediately after the body of Jesus was taken down from the cross. Further, we can admit that it is not important to know precisely what did happen, and that it is not true that Christ's Resurrection and ours are related as cause to effect.

What is important to understand is that man is a spiritual being, and that he has his own appropriate spiritual body interpenetrating his mortal body of earth. At conversion he becomes conscious of spiritual life, later on of his spiritual body. This consciousness enables him to live the resurrection life now, to understand the startlingly original words, *I am* the Resurrection, and to perceive that already he is a partaker of the glory which shall be revealed. Out of his vivid present experience grows his hope for the future, when he shall reach the full glorification of his body.

Men die before this is accomplished. It was believed that Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob were still waiting for their bodily perfection in the coming Kingdom. But Jesus reached His before His death. The transfiguration lets us into the secret that He had attained to mastery of His body, and that but for the bitter cry of humanity, His end on earth would have been far different from that which we read of in the Gospels.

Since Jesus reached bodily perfection before the Kingdom has come, we conclude that, in reality, there is no need for the patriarchs and for us to wait for some vague, future Resurrection Day, but that one by one as we go forward we shall reach our full consummation in soul and body.

There is more light to come to us to-day concerning our bodies. The religious world is awaking to the fact that they are not excluded from the present redemptive process of life. Human bodies vary enormously from grossness to subtlety.

It is an observed fact that the more spiritual life is claimed for the body, the more subtle and responsive it becomes. This opens up the possibility that as Christ gained the complete mastery of His body, so we may of ours. St Paul believed that at the coming again of Christ the mortal bodies of the saints would, in a moment, be transfigured, and mortality swallowed up of life. If we take this literally, we can easily believe too that Jesus resumed His body, and that it was transfigured finally at His Ascension. But we have been warned off taking the apocalyptic vesture literally, and we must get at the kernel of truth which St Paul conveyed in these peculiar modes. We shall arrive at the belief that however refined our bodies are, and however complete our mastery of them is, yet, insomuch as they were fashioned that we might live on this earth, in passing on to another plane of being, those organs adapted only for earth must somehow be left behind; but if we are ripe for the passage hence, we shall neither taste nor see the dissolution of our mortal remains.

Finally, our resurrection is related to the resurrection of Jesus, because both are the results of that divine law of human life as conceived in the eternal mind of God. Jesus alone perfectly fulfilled that divine law, and thus became the norm by which we who have erred and gone astray may correct our aberrations and bring our experience into line with His. In calling Jesus the norm we suddenly come in sight again of the old discarded Church doctrines. If Jesus was really the norm, then He must really have lived a perfect life. The incorruptibility of His body may still have been a fact, although Peter's reference to the sixteenth Psalm was not a strong defence. But how was Jesus the one supreme exception? The Church answers confidently that He was made man of the substance of the Virgin Mary His mother; and by substance is meant that underlying intrinsic nature wherein her true womanhood consisted. If this is true, then Jesus, while contradicting the whole of human experience, yet triumphantly vindicates by His moral grandeur that it is He who is normal: the rest of mankind has departed from the norm; and those who have found that their religion built on human experience has failed, will find in Him the one thing necessary in order to build up that which will stand the dissolution of time and death.

'Beloved, it is not yet manifested what we shall be, yet when it is manifested we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is.'

## IV

The doctrine of the Resurrection makes necessary the doctrine of the Ascension ; and the Ascension in its turn throws a reflex light on the Resurrection. The two events are of the same order, they belong to the supernatural plane, and they demand the same canon of interpretation.

The accounts given by St Matthew and St Mark, and by St Luke in his Gospel and the *Acts of the Apostles*, are not only discrepant, but they seem to presuppose a view of the locality of heaven that has long been obsolete. These facts alone have led many to a hasty rejection of the Ascension altogether ; but there is a prevalent notion to-day that since the Ascension stories cannot be pressed literally they must be understood in part symbolically. This bit of liberalism is not on any account to be extended to the Resurrection, and thus an arbitrary line is drawn between the Resurrection and Ascension clauses of the Creed, dividing what is historical from what is symbolical.

Naturally we turn, in this perplexity, to see whether Jesus said anything about His Ascension as He did about the Resurrection. We find that He spoke explicitly of His rising again, and His coming again, but anything about His Ascension can only be inferred from a few words of His on the cross to the dying thief : To-day shalt thou be with me in Paradise.

There has been much controversy about what Jesus meant by Paradise, and many have tried hard to show that it was a department of Hades in the nether world. This is extremely improbable. We know how deeply the Book of Enoch influenced Jesus. The Slavonic Enoch placed Paradise above in the third heaven. This is St Paul's belief,[1] and also St John's in the Apocalypse, who adds that in the midst of it is the Tree of Life [2]—the latter detail agreeing with the florid picture of the Book of Enoch. We gather that the Garden of Eden is a type of the heavenly Paradise, and that even its rivers Pison, Gihon, Hiddekel, and Euphrates have their magnificent heavenly counterpart. Hence Jesus' word to the thief signified that on that very day he should, like Enoch, Elijah, and Moses, ascend with Him to Paradise. Who but Jesus would have coupled a criminal with Moses ?

This understanding of Jesus' word is corroborated by all we know of His modes of thought. We saw that it was His

[1] 2 Cor. xii. 2–4. [2] Rev. ii. 7.

expectation of the Kingdom that made Him announce so confidently His rising again, and it was the same dominant thought that decided the modes in which He imagined the Ascension. Putting all three together—the Resurrection, the Ascension, and the Parousia—we are driven to the conclusion that Jesus on the cross believed that at His death He should immediately ascend to the heavenly Paradise, from whence, after no long time, He should come again in glory and establish His kingdom on earth.

This expectation of Jesus is of immense value when we approach the Ascension from within, but it does not help us much to understand the narratives of the Synoptic Gospels, and it appears to change their order by putting the Ascension before the Resurrection appearances. Here the critics can give us no help, and Jesus confessedly did not say all He had to say because His disciples could not bear it. But He promised the Spirit of truth for guidance into those truths of His Resurrection and Ascension, about which He could not be explicit during His lifetime.

According to Jewish thought there were seven heavens, Paradise being in the third. Into this Enoch and Elijah were received, and St Paul was caught up. These seven heavens are the seven planes of consciousness of the theosophists. Christ's ascension to Paradise with the penitent thief must not be confounded with His ascension to the Father, 'Touch me not, for I am not yet ascended to my Father.' This final ascension is referred to constantly in St John's Gospel, and St Paul writes a marvellously illuminating word about it in his letter to the Ephesians, when he says that Christ ascended up far above all heavens (i.e. above the seven heavens).[1]

With this thought in mind, let us approach the Ascension from within.

At once a sudden and unexpected light shines from all parts of the Fourth Gospel.

The author ignores the Synoptic accounts of the Ascension, and yet shows in many of his chapters that he not only knows all about it, but that it is a necessary part of his whole scheme of life.

The Christ when He became flesh was born from above, and therefore He must eventually reach the place from whence He came. Stated conversely we read, No man hath ascended up to heaven, but he that came down from heaven.

[1] Eph. iv. 10.

There has been a tendency to apply these words only to the Christ, but St John applies the same law of life to men. That a man may enter into the divine life of the Kingdom he must, we read, be born from above.[1] This new life, being born of God, is eternal, and working from man's inward spirit it permeates outwards until his whole being—spirit, soul, and body—is lifted up to heaven at the Last Day. Man, too, if he is born from above must ascend above. Hence, as the Ascension of Christ is not an isolated event in which His members have no part, He says to His disciples, I go to prepare a place for you, and if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also. And this is the return to the Father's house, and to the Father's bosom, from whence we all came forth.

St Paul's rich experience of the ascended Lord is not only in line with St John's profound teaching, but it shows us that even here we may have a foretaste of the ascended life. In the Epistle to the Romans, when he works out his great conception of the Christian's union with Christ, he does not stop short until he cries triumphantly that we are already partakers of the glory which shall be revealed, for whom God justified, them He also glorified.[2]

And to the Ephesians he affirms that God hath not only raised us up together with Christ, but hath also made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus.[3]

It is this full experience of the Christian Church, expressed in the Gospel of St John, and shared by St Paul, that finally helps us to understand the Ascension narratives of the Synoptic Gospels.

The Epistle to the Hebrews is as rich on the Ascension as the Gospel of St John.

Seeing Jesus as the great High Priest of humanity, and, approaching Him with a mind steeped in the Alexandrian view of the Levitical priesthood, he takes no notice of the resurrection stories, but passes immediately from the death of Jesus to His Ascension. God's Son, 'when He had by Himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high.' Again, 'this man, after He had offered one sacrifice for sins for ever, sat down on the right hand of God.[4]

Jesus' priesthood on earth was limited to a very little flock, owing to the stubborn fact of human nature that a man cannot

[1] John iii. 3 (margin).
[2] Rom. viii. 18–30.
[3] Eph. ii. 5, 6.
[4] Heb. i. 3, and x. 12; see also xii. 2.

be in two places at once. Hence for a perfected priesthood, the limitations of place and body must be removed, and this was effected for Jesus by death, which translated Him to the unlimited heavenly life, and enabled Him in His perfected spiritual body, not only to reach all souls, but also to act on them intimately by the authority and power that He received direct from God.

Hence, although we have arrived at the truth of Ascension subjectively, yet our faith in the truth necessarily presupposes the objective truth that Jesus' earthly life of humiliation was actually consummated in heavenly glory.

The author of this Epistle never contemplated the Ascension as an isolated event in the life of the eternal Son of God. For him Jesus is the forerunner ; and if He enters into the Holy of Holies, into which the High Priest only was allowed to enter once a year, it is that He may remove the veil, and throw it open to all who will follow in His footsteps.

Jesus' death must have appeared as the very worst thing that could have happened to one standing at the cross with any sympathy for Him, and such a one would have found the ways of God's providence inscrutable. Yet after many days the Church knew that it was expedient for Jesus to go away, for she owed her very existence to His wider coming again in the Spirit. Death then for Jesus, according to the Epistle, was the passing from a cramped room, in which He could not put forth all His wealth of pity and love towards mankind, to a boundless heaven, whence He could act fully on all those who would receive Him. And this is the revelation of what is true for each one of us. Here in this world is our opportunity to translate into living experience the great events of the Christ-life. By being born again of the Spirit we apprehend His birthday. Harassed and burdened with our sins, we find our way to the crucified Lord, and to the tomb in which our sins are buried. Many are content to stay there, and ask for nothing more than to be allowed to show their love and piety in reverently guarding the tomb. But we are called to enter into the power of the resurrection life, and, like Jesus, to go about doing good. Even this is not all. Like St Paul, we are to pass on to apprehend the Ascended Lord, and when our faith rests on the marvellous truth that we are already seated with Christ in the heavens, then from that high vantage ground we shall gain the ascendancy over all principalities and powers, over all sin and disease, until we are ripe to enter through Death's golden gate into our

consummated glory with Christ. Whether we can attain to this ripeness in one lifetime is uncertain. It may take (who knows?) many lives to reach the goal that Christ reached; but whenever reached we too shall transcend all limitations of space and place, and, like Christ, hold it in our power to appear on earth to any who are sufficiently prepared to see us. 'For we are come unto Mount Sion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels, to the general assembly and Church of the first-born, and to God the judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect, and to Jesus the mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling that speaketh better things than that of Abel,' we are come to the great Communion of Saints; and if, when we look around, the appalling condition of the world tempts us to despair, and the Kingdom of God seems farther off than ever, let us remember that behind us is an innumerable company, with Christ as their Captain, who on their white horses are going forth to accomplish with us the victory of the ages.

# CHAPTER X

## THE CHURCH

### I

THERE is no teaching of Jesus', outside of what is strictly ethical, that has not partly changed its form during the course of history, and this is pre-eminently true of the Church. When we think of the historical Church, and then go back to the picture of Jesus and His little flock preaching the Gospel of the Kingdom, we can see no more likeness between them than between the oak-tree and the acorn. In truth the likeness is even less, for Jesus was passionately preoccupied with the coming of the Kingdom, His mind was far removed from the ecclesiastical, and the form in which He cast His vision of the future was in no wise ecclesiastical but theocratic.

He chose His disciples for the express purpose of preparing them to go forth and help Him in preparing a people for the coming Kingdom. Their work was a continuation of John the Baptist's, and it was to go forward not only while Jesus was with them, but during the mournful though short time while the Bridegroom was taken away until His coming again. Jesus gave His disciples minute directions for this little while. His ministers were ministers for the Kingdom, His sacraments were sacraments of the Kingdom ; and if ministers and sacraments were in any way to involve a priesthood it was only for the age that was fast passing away, for in the coming Kingdom sin and suffering and death would pass away also, and the glorious Church that remained would not be an ecclesiastical institution, but an open Temple for heavenly worship in the City of God.

The nucleus of Jesus' thought of the glorious Church is in the Book of Enoch. It was this He had in mind at the memorable occasion when Peter confessed that He was the Christ ; and to get all the words spoken to Peter into their original perspective, one has to keep in mind that the next

event was the advent of the Kingdom, and then in subservience to the Kingdom should Peter and his companions begin to reign as kings and priests together with Christ.

But the Kingdom has not yet come, and the Church that has come is the unexpected revelation to St Paul of God's gospel concerning Jesus Christ to the Gentiles.

Thus if Jesus thought of an ecclesiastical institution at all, it was not of a new one, but of the old one which was about to pass away. Nothing is farther from the truth than to say that He deliberately set Himself to found a Church with a threefold ministry of Bishops, Priests, and Deacons, and all its ecclesiastical economy. It can more easily be shown that, since the Jewish Church of which He was a member was responsible for Pharisaism, and for all the cruelties of the religious spirit, He would deliberately guard His disciples against the repetition of such an ugly state of things by swallowing up the Church in the Kingdom.

## II

After Jesus had entered on His extended and glorified life in heaven, and had ceased to be seen of His disciples, it became necessary for them to meet together for prayer and waiting upon God, that they might learn how they were to carry on the work of preaching the Gospel of the Kingdom, during the time that Jesus was not visibly present with them. Their prayer, waiting, and urgent need brought about a great outpouring of the Holy Ghost on the day of Pentecost ; and thus endued with power they continued their evangelical mission, inspired by the hope that Israel would still repent, and before that generation had passed away their Lord would come again.

If Israel had repented Christianity could have lasted a generation without much need of organisation, or of a great formula to carry it. Since Israel did not repent it was necessary to turn it into a new channel. Looking back we see that there were two great possibilities that its evolution might take—either a simple Christianity discarding all forms as far as possible, insisting on fellowship and non-resistance to evil, and indifferent to the states and governments of this world ; or a new ecclesiastical form, taking over from the old just so much as could be carried over into the new.

In either case there was need of a master-mind to give it an emphatic push in one direction or the other. The master-

mind was not long coming, and the genius of St Paul once for all cast the molten elements of Christianity into an ecclesiastical mould.

We need not doubt that even without St Paul, Christianity would have lived on by the impetus given to it by Christ, not only while He was on earth, but much more from the force of His unseen life in heaven ; and sooner or later it would have created its own new form ; but since St Paul did actually decide its historical form it seems wise to accept it, for we could not reject it now without incurring irreparable loss. So while we hold on to historical and ecclesiastical Christianity, we must insist at the same time that ecclesiasticism is not of the very essence of Christianity, and that other bodies that are not in outward communion with the Church have their contribution to make towards our understanding of the mind of Christ.

The Church is necessarily a visible body. An invisible Church is a contradiction in terms. She has her invisible side, because, like all living visible things, she has an invisible soul.

Her prime business is to hold the balance between inward and outward things. It is always possible for any one to declare that Christianity is a wholly spiritual religion that rejects all forms ; but man's constitution as we know it, experience, and Jesus Himself, all point to the value of outward things in the spiritual life ; and therefore when the Church in keeping with her very nature insists on outward values, she can point to the teaching of Jesus, and show that she is in accordance with His mind.

In the Old Testament religion has its inward and outward aspects, and the emphasis is generally on the outward : the New Testament only differs from the Old in putting the emphasis on the inward.

The Church being a visible body must for her continued existence have a ministry. She could not be long unconscious of this need, and before the first generation after Christ's Ascension had passed away, she became conscious that this need was supplied by the apostles who incontrovertibly had received their authority from Christ. When Christianity began to spread throughout Palestine and beyond its border, an immense amount of work and responsibility fell on the heads of the apostles, for they were expected to organise the charities, to lay hands on converts that they might receive the gift of the Holy Ghost, to ordain ministers for the organisa-

tions that sprang up, and to give the final, authoritative word in the controversies that arose.

Naturally they relieved themselves of what they could, and they entrusted the charities to deacons whom they created for the purpose, setting them apart to this ministry by the solemn precedental act of laying on of hands. In the same way they created elders or bishops for the rising congregations, and the infant Church found herself with a threefold ministry.

When the apostles knew for certain that the offer of the Kingdom to Israel was deferred indefinitely, and therefore Christ would not come yet, and also when the years slipped by and their numbers were diminishing, it seemed wise to entrust their full authoritative powers to successors who were called not apostles but bishops ; and henceforth those in charge of congregations kept the name of elders only. The bishops in their turn acted on apostolic precedent, until gradually the Church awoke to the fact that she possessed an apostolical succession.

It is evident that she did not begin with a doctrine of apostolical succession and then act on it ; rather, it was an observed fact, and she eventually enunciated the doctrine. It would be well for modern controversialists to remember this before their invective becomes heated and bitter. A valid ministry is made from within outwards. First comes the inward call, then the candidate is solemnly set apart and receives the prayers of the congregation, and only after these indispensable conditions are fulfilled is the whole thing outwardly and orderly clenched by the laying on of hands of the bishop and presbytery.

Hence instead of the Kingdom came the Church. So far as was possible the invisible Kingdom became visible in the Church, and the Kingdom's ministry of kings and priests became the Church's ministry of bishops, priests, and deacons. The change was drastic, but it was inevitable. Had the Kingdom come, there would have been no Church as we know it ; since it did not come, the apostles and St Paul were merely driven by the inexorable logic of events, when through their fashioning the infant society of Christ finally emerged a full-grown ecclesiastical institution.

## III

The Church, then, being a visible body cannot exist without a ministry, and further, being a sacramental body, she cannot work without sacraments.

It concerns us to know whether she was driven to borrow her sacraments from the Greek mystery cults, or did she find them already to hand in the mind and teaching of her Lord?

Did Jesus hold a sacramental outlook on life?

The Gospels are unanimous in their answer. Jesus regarded Himself as a sacrament—He that hath seen me hath seen the Father also; and His words as sacramental—The words that I speak unto you, they are spirit and they are life. These quotations are from St John's Gospel, and lest anyone should say that they do not give the very words of Jesus Himself, we will turn to the Synoptic Gospels, which fully endorse the sacramentalism of St John.

Jesus' feeding of the five thousand was sacramental because it was an outward and visible sign to the starving people that they should feast at Messiah's table in the Kingdom. Many of Jesus' acts of healing were sacramental, as when He laid hands on the sick, when He made clay and applied it, and when His spoken word carried with it the spirit of life. Jesus' mighty works were intended by Him to be sacraments; and His entry into Jerusalem riding upon an ass was a deliberate sacramental deed for those that had eyes to see.

All these things show that Jesus had a sacramental mind that, while insisting on the inward things, never lost sight of the value and significance of outward things for the spiritual life.

Not only was His mind sacramental, but He endorsed and repeated sacramental rites. The baptism of John was a token to the repentant soul that it should be baptised with the Holy Ghost before the Dread Day of Wrath; and Jesus by acknowledging that John's baptism was from heaven showed that He regarded it as a sacrament having divine authority. He Himself took over the baptismal rite, and made it the sacramental sign and token that the repentant and faithful soul should be admitted into the Kingdom when it came; and, finally, He gave a tremendous sacrament of His Body and Blood which contained the whole mystery of His Person and His message, and was a repeated pledge to the faithful that they should eat bread and drink wine for ever at His table in the Kingdom.

The Church, then, found ready to hand Christ's sacraments of the Kingdom; in appropriating them she necessarily changed them; and we must now inquire the nature of the change as they passed from rites of the Kingdom to rites of the Church.

Holy Baptism was essentially a sacrament for the coming

Kingdom. It did not originate with Christ, but was the continuation of John the Baptist's, and was, like his, a preparation for the coming Kingdom. We may infer that Jesus saw no need to discontinue the rite associated with John's name, which He regarded as of divine authority ; and we may infer also that had He dropped the rite, His disciples would not have picked it up again and claimed His authority for it.

Holy Baptism was administered to all those who repented and believed the Gospel of the Kingdom. It was a sacramental pledge to them that they were forgiven and already made members of the present invisible Kingdom, and also that they should take their place in it when it came.

We see in the book of the *Acts* that this was the exact significance of baptism as administered by the apostles of the Lord. But as time passed and the Church took the place of the Kingdom they regarded it as the mode of entry into the society of Christ, now definitely called the Body of Christ and His Church. By the end of the first century another factor of experience had to be reckoned with in any valuation of the sacrament. John's baptism was a token that the baptised penitent should receive the baptism of the Holy Ghost. After the Day of Pentecost, the outpouring of the Spirit then received was regarded as the Day foretold by Joel and John the Baptist, and therefore the real thing being come, John's baptism could be discarded as of no further use ; but Jesus' baptism was a token of right of entry into the coming Kingdom, and when the Kingdom did not come, there was need for a master-mind to appropriate the sacrament to a new use.

St John, although he says nothing about the Church, supplies the intermediate link between the Kingdom and the Church. Jesus drew a sharp line between what was present and what was future. St John treasured all the words of Jesus dealing with what was present and inward. St Matthew gave both the inward and outward aspect of the Kingdom ; St John gives the inward aspect not only of the Kingdom but of all the future things associated with the outward Kingdom. Thus he sees judgment, resurrection, and eternal life as processes of the secret present, and all that is left for the future is the unveiling of what is already begun in the hearts of believers. By regarding the Kingdom as present and 'as not of this world' he could keep intact the truth that baptism was a pledge of entry into the future Kingdom, and yet declare emphatically that it was a means of entry into it now.

The sacramental element that appeared in St Mark is expanded in St John. The inward and the outward are coupled, the water and the spirit, and the new birth by water and spirit is the means of full entrance into the Kingdom of God, and that eternal life which, together with judgment, culminate in the glorious hereafter. Thus the Church, which imperiously demanded a sacramental rite of baptism for her extension and maintenance, took over the rite of the Kingdom and made it the means of entrance into her own body.

Getting back to the synoptic point of view, we are compelled to ask whether Israel will finally receive the Kingdom, or whether the Kingdom lives only in the Church.

If we decide that the Kingdom has not come and never will, then forasmuch as baptism was a pledge of entry into the coming Kingdom, there is no valid reason for keeping it at all ; but if we believe with St Paul that the Kingdom will finally come to Israel, the sacrament will then keep the same significance for Israel as it had for Christ's disciples. It was open during the period of transition from Kingdom to Church to reject it altogether ; and if this course had been adopted, historic Christianity would have run on simple quaker lines, but it was experience that largely decided the value of baptism, and retained it, handing it over to the Church, who has enriched it still further out of her own full experience.

The Church, claiming the authority of her Lord for her teaching of Holy Baptism, has insisted on its necessity for salvation ; but since the Church's sacrament was a transvaluation of the Kingdom's sacrament, the sacrament, although indispensable as the means of entrance into the Church, loses its absolute character.

Experience has decided the value of baptism, and the same experience will always yield the same results ; but experience has also shown that a man can be born again without any outward rite, and although such a one cannot be regarded as a member of the visible Church, yet he indubitably belongs to her soul. Only experience can decide whether the church or quaker method produces the better and more balanced results. I, for one, think that it points to the proper use of the sacrament, and that if the baptised Churchman will remind himself from time to time that baptism was first of all a sacrament of the Kingdom, he will be saved from bigotry and intolerance in his attitude towards those who have not been baptised.

Baptism, then, as it now stands is the means and pledge whereby the repentant and faithful soul knows that it has been made a subject of the invisible Kingdom of Heaven, and of the Body of Christ which is the Church.

The sacrament of the Lord's Supper was as Christ intended, like baptism, a sacrament of the Kingdom.

At the Last Supper Jesus, in view of His death, which would be such a terrible test to His disciples' faith, gave them Bread and Wine as a sacramental pledge of their place in the coming Kingdom, and that they should feast with Him for ever at His table. The blood was also a sign of the new testament made with Israel, who as the bride of the bridegroom would have the law of her Lord written in her heart.

When Israel refused her part of the new covenant, then the disciples of Jesus, inspired by love, decided to continue the sacrament as a memorial of their Lord's death, and to extend the new testament between Christ and Israel to the new revelation of Christ and the Church. A further transition was effected by St Paul, who here, as in his first apprehension of Christ, was guided by experience. He knew the power of the indwelling Christ, and when he continued in the apostles' fellowship through the breaking of bread, he knew further by experience what it was to feed on his glorified Lord. Hence the sacrament for him was a memorial of the Lord's death, and became an efficacious means of feeding not with, but on, Christ.

This was all that the Church needed. Being a mother it was incumbent on her to feed her children, who were through baptism very members incorporate in the mystical body of Christ. Nothing less than the Body and Blood of Christ could avail for their spiritual food; and these she offered through the sacramental means of her Bread and Wine.

There was still need to relate the sacrament to the eternal Word. Hence St John, viewing Jesus as the eternal Word in our human flesh, which He had consecrated and exalted in Himself to God's right hand, presents Him as the Living Bread whose Flesh is meat indeed, and whose Blood is drink indeed; and in this eternal light he regards both the sacramental feeding of the five thousand and the sacrament of the Last Supper, relating these two memorable events together because each is directly related to the eternal Christ.

It is still mainly experience that decides the value of this sacrament. Intellectual objections carry no weight whatever

to the one who, using the sacrament faithfully, finds that the Lord Himself draws near in it, and imparts Himself in ineffable communion ; to such a soul even the Church's dogmatic teaching, strong as it is, falls far short of the Blessed Reality ; and once this is known through experience it becomes impossible to settle down to any form of Christianity which is not definitely sacramental. At the same time, since the sacrament has changed from what it was when given by Christ, it has not quite the absolute value that it would have had if Christ had ordained it for the Church and not for the Kingdom.

When the Roman Catholic sets an absolute value on the Mass, he either judges or deplores those who do not agree with his theory of transubstantiation. The same is true of the High Anglican. There are many books on the Sacrament of the Altar, in which the author pours all the passion of his spiritual life into this sacrament, and leaves little for other and urgent aspects of life as Christ conceived it ; and in this way proportion is lost. Let us remember that Jesus put the Gospel of the Kingdom in the first place, and then as we thankfully use the sacrament we shall keep it in its subordinate place to the Kingdom ; and though we shall always find the Lord draw near to us in the sacrament, we shall also be free to find Him draw near in the city and in the market, in the home and in the theatre, in the hospital and at the marriage festival, for where two or three are gathered together in His name, there is His Presence in the midst of them.

## IV

The Church, then, finding to hand the ministry of the Kingdom chosen by Christ Himself, and sacraments of the Kingdom ordained by Him too, found all that she needed to get herself well rooted in history, and to maintain her life and self-consciousness down the centuries.

Though she was not the Kingdom imagined by Christ and the prophets, yet she has approximated nearer to the Kingdom than any other body that has ever existed. Christ subordinated the individual to the Kingdom, and only in the Kingdom was He to find his full life. The Church has, as nearly as possible, preserved the Lord's thought, by insisting that only in the body of the Church does the individual find full salvation. Christ satisfied the needs of His sacramental mind by taking over baptism and creating the sacrament of

His Body and Blood. The Church, being herself a sacramental body stretching visibly into the world, and invisibly into the Kingdom of Heaven, has instinctively worked by the very sacraments which Christ ordained, and has felt at liberty to add to them as much as she would. Christ ordained a ministry that should carry on His work of preparation during the short period of His removal, and that should enter on a world-wide ministry between the coming of the Kingdom and its final consummation : the Church has simply carried on the ministry of preparation through many centuries, extending it into all the world. Moreover, she wrote the Books of the New Testament, decided controversies, held aloft the lamp of tradition, and amid the innumerable changes of the world has supplied the great binding thread of her memory. She is not the Kingdom, yet when one remembers her amazing history, and how she has kept intact every side and nuance of her Lord's mind, it seems almost accurate to say that she is actually the Kingdom come in another form, and in any case her mighty and unique place in the world has fully justified Christ's prescience of a dominion to come of which He should be Lord.

Yet the sins of the Church have been scarlet and her wounds very sore.

The Kingdom of God was rejected by Israel, but there were Churches before the Christian Church arose. The Jewish Church had fallen into all the sins to which a religious institution is liable. She had been haughty, exclusive, and proud, relentless, cruel, and intolerant ; she had inculcated a religious spirit in her devotees which was insatiable as fire ; and when the Christ stood in her midst she was so consumed with religion and blinded by her sins, that the fury of her religious passion flared out, and in the name of God she crucified the Christ.

No sooner was the Christian Church firmly on her feet than she was in danger of repeating the old sins of the Jewish Church. And later, as though there had been no warning from the past, she rushed headlong without a struggle into the religious abominations of the Inquisition.

Protestantism regarded the Inquisition as the peculiar invention of the Roman Catholic Church, and has willingly forgotten its own intolerance and persecutions. Nowadays Roman novelists write of the sufferings of Queen Mary and her co-religionists at the hands of cruel protestants. This sounds like a Prussian complaining of British 'frightfulness.'

The truth is that whenever there is an institution it tends towards cruelty in the exact proportion of its power and rigidity. An institution, dealing with the most important questions of life and death, and that believes itself infallible, cannot be tolerant. The Roman Church, holding the triple infallibility of Church, Book, and Christ, will always be capable of the worst sins of Judaism. Protestantism becomes more tolerant as it loses its faith in an infallible Book, but those who hold on to the infallibility of Christ can still show their teeth, and, opportunity favouring, could tear a heretic limb from limb.

The sins of institutionalism are exclusiveness when it thinks it has a monopoly of truth instead of standing and witnessing for the truth, which is true of all ; conservatism which, in its zeal to preserve the truth, makes it resist any new light ; religiousness which is the hard deposit left when the spirit of life has vanished.

With such frightful dangers in the way of institutionalism, one cannot escape the question whether an institution should not be abolished altogether. But the loss would be too great.

The Church has a great memory reaching into the far past, by which she can draw on all her rich and varied experience. Her knowledge far transcends that of any individual. She is the only bulwark against partial views of truth and individual idiosyncrasies. It is she and not another that has preserved for us the priceless treasures of the Person and teaching of Jesus Christ and the Bible. And therefore while we adhere to the Church as to a mother, we must see how we can chivalrously guard her against the dangers that beset her as an institution.

The dangers are great in proportion to her conservatism, rigidity, and power. We see no way of escape for the Roman Catholic Church ; but in England we are blessed with a Church that is always being blamed for her looseness, compromise, and comprehensiveness. Yet these are her glory, and here is our opportunity. Tighten her up, and she will start persecuting, and revive all the old religious sins : take her as she is, and she will teach us all that can be known of the mind of Christ, and, while supplying the indispensable institution, she will allow at the same time the utmost freedom to her children to develop all that may be lying in them.

And she has a great task for the future.

## V

From many quarters we hear the cry that we are on the eve of a new religious age. Whenever there has been war there has been much talk of imminent great things, and generally in the past it has been taken as the harbinger of the end of the world. Not a few to-day are in the mental condition of the first disciples of Jesus, who expected daily the Lord's return in the air.

The hope of the Lord's return in this form has not been salutary. It has fostered the idea that nothing could be done with this world, and therefore it was no good trying to improve it, particularly as it was to come to an end so soon. Once we have cleared our minds of such notions, and are prepared for the world to go on, if need be, for another million years, then we shall pull ourselves together, and see what we by corporate action can do towards the creation of a better world order.

Entirely apart from the war, however, there have been innumerable signs during the last hundred years that the day was coming when we should shift our whole mental outlook on life and religion, and that this change would be more revolutionary than the Reformation of the sixteenth century.

There is a section of High Anglicans that regards the Reformation with abhorrence, and believes that a change will be only towards Rome ; but most of us believe that the papacy had long accomplished its work in the world when Luther stood up against it ; we believe that all the most fruitful European movements have sprung from Luther's action at the Diet of Worms, and that the new birth towards which we are moving will not, for the time, bring us nearer to Rome, but farther away. If ever (and why should it not ?) the desired and prayed for reunion with Rome should be effected, it will be, not by our walking back to her, but by her leaping forward to embrace us. The essence of the new movement will be the approximation of the Church towards the Kingdom.

What is the relation of the Church to the Kingdom now ?

It is the small portion of rock seen above the troublesome waves of this world that has its immense base hidden in the depths of the sea.

Or the Church is a little circle in the large circle of the Kingdom touching it at one point—the new birth. The Church is saved and lives by hope—the hope of the Kingdom—

and she will fulfil her true function only when she enlarges her circle until it coincides with that of the Kingdom.

Let us make it clear that, in our expectation of a new age, we do not expect a new revelation. The trouble now is that the truth lies in great isolated chunks. We have to build these together until we effect a great synthesis—a veritable marriage of Bernard and Abelard, Individualism and Catholicism, Religion and Art, East and West. With the new product we can proceed to create what will be new in the world's history—a Christian State. This could be done if the whole Church, headed by her bishops, willed it. Once the State is christened, then it will be possible for the individual to live according to the ethics of the Kingdom in the family, school, city, and nation. International relations are a difficulty, making it impossible for one nation to act without another; but since the German spirit has not conquered the world, all the great nations may now will peace for many years to come, and if under such favourable conditions two or three of them christen their states, they will remove the greatest hindrance in the way of a realised Christianity.

One Man in His great strength, constrained by love, made a mighty effort to bring the Kingdom. He was crushed in the effort, and what He yearned for did not come; but His agony was not in vain, for out of it was born the Church. We ask no individual to do what Christ could not do, but we call on the Church, which is His Body, to arise to her full strength, and to accomplish by her large corporate action what no single man could ever do.

The Church must either abdicate or work towards the Kingdom. Her Lord died to live, and it may be that she too must follow in His steps. We do not mean that she is to forswear her ministry and her sacraments—to slay herself for the satisfaction of her enemies; but as she was born of the Kingdom and received from the Kingdom the things by which she lives, so she should return to the Kingdom, that when the theocratic Kingdom comes she may lose nothing but her ecclesiasticism, and find her true resurrection and her true fulfilment in the larger Kingdom of God.

# CHAPTER XI

## ESCHATOLOGY

### I

ALTHOUGH Jesus' vision was clothed in the apocalyptic images of eschatology, yet even at the beginning of His ministry it is evident that He believed that His mission included a transvaluation of the past. The old wine-skins were bursting, and therefore while He continued of necessity to use them, He was deeply conscious of their inadequacy and relative value.

To-day we are in the same predicament, for while we are compelled to use the old theological modes, yet frequently our words must carry to our hearers a different meaning from that which we intend.

Jesus' transvaluation proceeded most intensely during His short public ministry, when His mind was focused on the two greatest conceptions of eschatology—the Kingdom and the Christ. He gave a new meaning to these, more by the image of His character that He stamped on the imagination of mankind, than by any modification of the old imagery.

When we come to the associated ideas of the Kingdom—predestination, election, judgment, heaven, hell, and the devil—we find that He used the old modes of expression; but in so far as the Kingdom and the Christ were transvalued by Him, it is necessary for us, if we are to get at what lay deepest in His mind, to carry the process through with all the details.

Jesus assented to the Old Testament doctrine of predestination and election, and it continued to appear not only in St Paul but even in St John. Since then, it is taught so grimly at times that a reaction is provoked, and for a generation or two it is lost sight of altogether. But it invariably returns, and it is our business to extract from it those truths which the greatest minds have ever thought of lasting importance.

The two extremes of statement are in Jeremiah and Calvin.

Jeremiah going down to the potter's house watched him as he wrought a work on the wheels. Sometimes the vessel was marred in the hand of the potter, so he made it again another vessel, as seemed good to the potter to make it.[1]

Here was a picture of the great Potter God, and the house of Israel which was clay in His hand. It seems impossible that any age can improve on it in its simplicity, beauty, and significance.

Calvin, when he read in the New Testament that salvation depended on election, dominated by the iron necessity of a logical mind, argued that election involved rejection ; and seeing no alternative to heaven but a flaming hell, was forced to believe that the great mass of mankind must perish everlastingly, because God had not elected them. Mankind has rightly revolted against this horrible doctrine ; but it needs to be reminded that there is a truth in the doctrine of election that must be recovered.

Until lately predestination has been mixed up with God's foreknowledge, which was an inference from other accepted postulates of God. But if we accept Bergson's doctrine of creative evolution, we shall see that the universe is incalculable (and the future too) in proportion as it rises out of mechanical modes into the spirit of life. It follows that God foreknows only what He foreordains, and since He is the Eternal Life, He foreordains as little as possible, preferring to regard the universe as His great romantic adventure.

In any consideration, then, of predestination, we may simplify it by omitting foreknowledge as not relevant.

Jesus believed in election, which always witnesses to God's sovereignty, and the practical conclusion He drew was that men are fundamentally unequal both in the natural world and the supernatural world of the Kingdom of God. On earth men are unequal, since to one God gives five talents, to another two, and to another one. Man's responsibility lies in the use to which he puts his talents. If he uses them he gains more : if he abuses them he loses what he has ; but only the man with five talents makes ten : the man with two cannot do more than double his ; and so the difference is permanent, and exists because God has so willed it.

In the Kingdom of God, God has chosen One Man for the highest place—Jesus Christ ; and for the endless gradations

[1] Jer. xviii. 1–6.

from the right hand and left hand of Christ to the place occupied by him who is least in the Kingdom, God alone is responsible: it is wholly as He and not man elects.

This fundamental inequality of individuals is true also of nations. They have their varying degree of greatness according as they stand by faith in God's true election. If they deny it or forget it, the greatest nations become the most brutal, and the unfaithful little nation only escapes the worst rottenness.

And therefore socialism can never be an adequate political expression of Christ's fundamental teaching, for it builds on the assumption that all men are equal, and is obliged to ignore the man who is taller than his fellows. Christ's hope for the world was in God's elect men. They are the Kings and the Priests in the Kingdom to whom authority is given. They receive authority, because they are the best men ; and they are the best men, because God has made them so. It was given to them to resist God's election and fall into the lowest pit of corruption, but by standing in their election they have reached their predestined place in the universe, and on them is the hope of the world.

Here is unexpected light for us. When the Church sets to work to christen the states she must not level down all distinctions to a drab mediocrity, but work with an aristocracy not of birth, but of elect men and women ; for, as Jesus taught us, it is through the elect only that the Kingdom of God can come.

## II

Jesus' teaching of heaven was reserved, and this reserve is maintained throughout the New Testament, even in the Revelation of St John ; for what is often taken for a description of heaven in the Apocalypse is not heaven, but the City of God coming down out of heaven.

From the few places where Jesus refers to heaven, we gather little more than that it is the dwelling-place of God, and that it is inhabited by angels and archangels, who wait upon God and minister to men on earth.

But Jesus' deepest thought of heaven is implicit in His teaching of the Kingdom of God. We saw that the coming Kingdom was the unveiling of the present inward Kingdom, and this is identical with heaven. Hence heaven is present,

invisible, eternal ; but at the coming of the Kingdom of God, much of heaven that is now hidden will be manifested on earth.

Man has a double entry into heaven. First, when he repents and believes the Gospel, his true spiritual man is made a citizen of heaven ; and when his redemptive life is complete in body as in soul, then his whole being enters heaven. This is future, and is expressed in the Lord's symbolism as happening after the Day of Judgment, for which even Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob are waiting.

But Jesus Himself entered into heaven in full bodily perfection, waiting for no future Judgment Day ; and this truth compelled St John to regard Judgment not so much in the future but as a present process, future only in its culmination ; and it follows that each individual as he passes through his day of judgment ascends, like Christ, into heaven in bodily perfection, and gains, like Christ, complete authority and power for ministering to those yet on earth.

With St John's help we also see that Jesus' teaching of man's double entry into heaven is still retained. Through his new birth he enters now in spirit into heaven, and when the new life has effected the redemption of his body, his whole being reaches heaven from whence he first came.

Nowadays we are frequently told that heaven is not a place but a state. Those who speak thus are merely caught in the violent reaction following last century's materialism. To be in a heavenly condition is contingent on being in a heavenly world. Heaven is not less than we understand by place ; rather it is much more, and our notion of place, which comes from our experience of this substantial seeming world, is only a shadow of the reality and durability of God's dwelling-place, which is from everlasting to everlasting.

Heaven necessitates hell.

A Roman Catholic priest, preaching recently on hell, proclaimed that it was not sufficient to say that the soul in hell was eternally separated from God—that was only the negative side of catholic teaching ; the positive teaching being that every sense that has sinned against God shall be tormented eternally in hell. This horrible doctrine cannot be controverted if the words of Jesus are taken literally. For He taught that when the Kingdom was come the Son of Man should be seated on His throne of glory, with the nations gathered before Him. Then when He separated them, like a shepherd the sheep from the goats, He would say to the goats on His left hand, ' Depart

from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels . . . and these shall go away into everlasting punishment.'

Many have tried to explain that the everlasting punishment into which the cursed go is aeonial pruning, since κόλασις can be made to mean a pruning; but the whole parable was taken over from the past without modification, and there is no doubt that the apocalyptists made hell as horrible as imagination could conceive. Either we must accept the atrocious doctrine literally, as the Roman Church does; or we must complete the transvaluation, accomplished for the Kingdom and the Messiah in the New Testament, but not carried out for hell.

Through St John's teaching we have learnt that the Day of Judgment, eternal life, and heaven are present realities, and we have only to take hell over from the future, and to put it in the present with them.

Instead of a man about to be cast into hell after the future Day of Judgment, he may be in hell while on earth. And not only so, but the man who has been born again, but is not yet sanctified, has part of his being in heaven, part in hell, and his body on earth, and he functions at least in three worlds. To be wholly dead in trespasses and sins is to be wholly in hell. To have wholly ceased from sin is to be wholly in heaven. Either state is rare on earth.

So long as the sinner is on earth it need not be unpleasant for him to be in hell, because earth can gratify his hellish desires; but after death, hell becomes a torment to him, because he carries with him his base passions, and he finds no means of satisfying them. Then the symbols of the quenchless fire and undying worm express his awful condition. But we may not conclude that he, driven to repentance by his sufferings, will yet never emerge out of hell; for all we know for certain is that here the man in hell who repents and has faith passes out of death into life, and the presumption is, that wherever a man is, if he repents he, through God's eternal mercy, attains to the salvation of his soul.

Purgatory, like hell, is also a present fact. Hence we may all know by experience here in this world something of heaven, and hell, and purgatory; and this present experience lights up for us the soul's conditions for a little way after death. Whether some souls will eventually be lost or annihilated, or whether all will be saved, we cannot know; and it is useless

to dogmatise. If a soul passes beyond in whom every spark of goodness has been quenched, we can only say with Browning's Pope—

> I avert my face, nor follow him
> Into that sad obscure sequestered state
> Where God unmakes but to remake the soul
> He else made first in vain; which must not be.[1]

## III

So long as man uses the categories of life and death, good and evil, so long will his heaven demand a hell, and the Kingdom of God, the Kingdom of Satan.

The idea of the Kingdom of Satan ruled by him as the evil one, and of the immense retinue of demons or spirits who obey him, was very prominent in the eschatological scheme by which Jesus worked.

Jesus attributed to Satan not only sin, like His predecessors, but also sickness, disease, and death. He also believed that a man might be possessed by evil spirits, and that in certain cases Satan himself came and entered into a man as into Judas.

Over against the Kingdom of Satan was the Kingdom of God, and against Satan and his angels the Messiah and His angels, who in the great world-conflict should finally conquer Satan, and cast him into hell-fire, where with his angels, and those human beings whom he had drawn into sin, he should remain in torment for ever and ever.

Modern scholarship has traced the human pedigree of Satan through the folk-lore of Palestine, Babylon, and Persia, and in the process has exploded many hoary old legends which were once believed in literally.

The story of the fall of Satan from heaven, which was a foundation-stone in St Anselm's scheme, and which reappeared with such sublime magnificence in *Paradise Lost*, has vanished before the light of scholarship. Even the passage in the Apocalypse describing the war in heaven, on which Milton depended, gives the history of the final overthrow of evil, and not of a prehistoric event in heaven. However zealous Christians are to maintain the lofty prerogatives and personal dignity of the devil, they will be compelled to recognise, sooner or later, that Satan stands for the unchanging spirit of evil, which has been outwardly imagined variously as the Arabic Jinn, the

[1] *Ring and the Book*, The Pope, 2129–2132.

Babylonian Tiamat, the Hebrew Rahab and Leviathan, the medieval thing with hoofs and claws, the fire-belching Apollyon of the *Pilgrim's Progress*, and the polished and cultured gentleman of modern fiction.

Man finds from experience that his temptations arise either from within or from without. When Christian was passing through the Valley of the Shadow of Death, he was rescued from despair only when he found that the horrible blasphemies that assailed him were whispered into his ear from without.

It is this deep sense that in temptation man is struggling with a spirit of evil beyond himself that has forced him to objectify the devil; and for the same reason, while careless henceforth of the form in which he imagines the evil principle, he must still think of it as the transcendent spirit of wickedness.

Wicked demons may be elementals or departed spirits, once human, bound to earth, and ready to seize any opportunity of a favourable condition to enter a human body. Hence the need for exorcists.

The nineteenth century, with its quenched vision, could dismiss the demonology of the Synoptics with contempt. But its confident contempt is passing away, and we have a little more light on the subject.

Modern spiritualism, however much we may think it should be discountenanced, has its value just here. Frederic Myers, in his book *Human Personality and its Survival of Bodily Death*, has collected many cases of modern possession which cannot, like some of the synoptic stories, be traced to lunacy or epilepsy. Until every modern case is reduced to a physical cause or human fraud, we may continue to believe that the synoptic stories are substantially true accounts of men possessed; and that of this strange and still partly shrouded region of man's psychology Jesus had unexampled understanding, and was thus able to bring relief to many vexed and harassed people.

These spirits are controlled by the transcendent spirit of evil. Should ever the universe be brought back into crystalline union with God, then the devil may vanish like night overcome by day, and leave 'not a wrack behind.'

## IV

Jesus did many miracles which, without affecting humility, He called mighty works. He did not think the power of

working miracles was peculiar to Himself, for He expected the same of His disciples, and He even recognised that like works would be done by those who had no part in the Kingdom. Miracles were the sign either of the invisible omnipotent Kingdom, or of those who had alighted upon hidden powers of the soul, and were using them not to edification but to resist the elect.

The early Church grouped under the heading of miracles, the fulfilment of prophecy, the birth, resurrection, and ascension of Christ, the works of healing and exorcism, and the creative miracles, such as the feeding of the five thousand, the turning of water into wine, and the stilling of the storm.

Some of these must go into a different category.

Prophecy, being the revelation partial or complete of what is always true, is fulfilled not once but many times in history, and is miraculous only in the sense that everything is miraculous.

Healing the sick is part of the law that the body is controlled by the mind, and when the mind, by being fixed on God, becomes spiritual, it renews the body and keeps it in health. This, too, is mysterious, but it is not what is generally meant by miraculous.

The two orders of miracle that remain for consideration are the breaking in of God into this world order, and the mighty works of man as man when indwelt by God. The one is evidence of God's free will, the other of man's.

When a man becomes conscious of another plane than the material one, he often at the same time realises that he has many secret powers lying in his soul. He is then tempted to yield to the will to power, and to seek to possess the kingdoms of the world. If he fails he becomes a thaumaturgist ; if he, like Christ, overcomes the will to power, and chooses the will to love, he will walk in a humble path, but sooner or later he will perform love's mighty works.

It is impossible at present to draw a sharp dividing line between the miracles attributed to Jesus that really happened, and those that did not happen. There is a strong probability that here and there a miracle has crept into the narrative that is unhistorical, as for example that of the Gadarene swine. Also, in the Fourth Gospel the author, while relying on tradition for his belief that Jesus worked miracles even to the raising of the dead, handles his miracles with the creative freedom of his mystical imagination.

There seems to be only one way in which Christians can

vindicate their Master's miracles, and that is by doing them themselves. The fact that, to-day, most people believe that Jesus healed the sick is owing to the indisputable fact that many in His name are healing the sick ; and when they proceed to do the works He did and greater works, then we shall know far better where to assign the limits to Jesus' miraculous power.

The first order of miracle, which is the evidence of God's free will, is usually supposed to be manifested in the Virgin Birth of Jesus.

Formerly, whatever could not be explained was attributed to God's miraculous agency ; and it is evident that increase of science lessens the number of these miracles. A miracle to satisfy the modern mind must have deep significance, and a meaningless miracle has no excuse for lingering.

The doctrine of the Virgin Birth has been in the critical melting-pot long enough for us to see the main issues. The controversy is not at an end, and it would be rash to say whether the dogma understood literally will be retained or dismissed. In the meanwhile, we may say that the real difficulty with the doctrine is not that it involves a miracle—a miracle would be very welcome just here—but that it has lost nearly all its original significance.

St Anselm, believing implicitly that sin came into the world through the disobedience of the Virgin Eve, was led naturally to believe that the remedy for sin came through the Virgin Mary.

The Schoolmen—and the argument is still one of the chief among orthodox apologists—maintained that the Virgin Birth was necessary to cut off the entail of original sin. It was held sufficient to point to the testimony of Scripture to prove that *all* men had sinned.

This argument cannot satisfy the critics of the Bible. It is true that the Bible writers believed that all men were involved in Adam's sin ; but in proportion as men lose faith in Adam, they are driven to conclude that the dogma of human fallibility had its root in the observed fact that man was a faulty creature. And so, we are all agreed, he is. But when we look again we discover here and there a soul that we would naturally conclude to be sinless were it not for the dogma of original sin. And if we regarded the character of Jesus without dogmatic bias we should conclude that His goodness consisted, not in a colourless freedom from anger, pride, haughtiness, all of which were conspicuous in Him, but an invariable obedience to the spirit of life pulsing through His whole being.

This leads us finally away from the numbing abstract conception of sin that has ruled too long in the theological world, to the inspiring perception that Jesus was one of those rare spirits who was perfect, not because sin had been cut off at its source for Him, but because He was wholly alive, and that we are called not to an imaginary, dull, sinlessness, but to a like obedience to the spirit of life.

The Virgin Birth has been regarded as the necessary mode of the Incarnation. The necessity vanishes for those who believe that the dogma of the Incarnation grew out of the Messianic consciousness of Jesus.

The early Church believed that celibacy was a higher state than marriage ; and it was unable to dissociate the notion of impurity from the great creative generative act. To us a virgin birth for such a reason is an implied insult to fatherhood.

The only argument that remains is that we need such a miracle to assure us that the transcendent God breaks into the order of this world when and as He will.

That is a strong sound reason, and the truth it guards is of inestimable importance. If we can point to no such transcendent act of God, then we are driven to an exclusively immanent view of the universe, and we know from India that immanence draws one into the nightmare of eternal recurrence. It is impossible to see any way of escape unless the transcendent God intervenes. The Old and New Testaments affirm that God has so intervened by a series of miraculous acts, which included the creation of Adam and Eve, the inspiration of the prophets, the birth, resurrection, and ascension of Jesus Christ. This doctrine of transcendence brings such a blaze of light that some of us are compelled to believe its truth, and it makes us understand what all this ado of Christianity has been about.

The Virgin Birth has kept before the world the truth of God's free will, and that we are not puppets in a mechanical world of endless cause and effect. Some are now trying whether they can maintain this uplifting truth without its aid, and if they succeed, the dogma will become an empty symbol ; but those who keep their faith that Jesus Christ was born of a virgin, will not only believe that the transcendent God has revealed Himself, but that the Virgin Birth is the great historical symbol of their new birth of the Spirit which is the beginning of their supernatural life in Christ.

# CHAPTER XII

## ETERNAL LIFE

THE Kingdom of God is Jesus' first thought, eternal life His second.

His emphasis is on the coming Kingdom rather than on the present veiled Kingdom, which He takes for granted ; and likewise He insists not on the truth so evident in the Psalms that repentance and faith lead to life now, but that those who are already alive should work together for the glorious future when the Kingdom shall be unveiled, and the children of the Kingdom enter into the full fruition of eternal life.

The Kingdom and eternal life are inseparable. Entrance into one is entrance into the other. In the thought of Jesus man can find life only in the Kingdom, for no man liveth unto himself : he lives unto God and unto his brother.

St Paul sees eternal life as present and future. The gift of God *is* eternal life, not to be earned, but received by faith in the present. It is inseparable from Christ, who is our hidden life. When Christ comes again He will render to every man according to his deeds : to them who by patient continuance in well-doing seek for glory and honour and immortality, eternal life : and thus, when Christ our life appears, we also shall appear with Him in glory.[1]

St John developed the present aspect. When a man is born again of water and spirit he enters simultaneously into the Kingdom of God and into eternal life. Always St John preserves the thought of Jesus that eternal life is to be found only in the Kingdom ; and in the magnificent passage where the Christ-Shepherd says, 'I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly,'[2] this rich abounding life is given to the sheep as members of a flock.

Since the Church has come and not the Kingdom, it is her imperative duty to keep her Lord's doctrine intact. This

[1] See Rom. ii. 6, 7 ; vi. 23 ; Col. iii. 3, 4. [2] John x. 10.

she early recognised and expressed in the uncompromising phrase, *Extra ecclesiam nulla salus*—a phrase often wrested into meaning something that Christ would have entirely repudiated. There is no difficulty here to the modern mind which is realising ever more fully that isolated souls—pure egotists—perish, and that men are saved only as the body of which they are members is saved also.

We speak of eternal life, according to our grade of churchmanship, as though it began at baptism or conversion, and, like time, had a beginning and, unlike time, no end. There is a prevailing confusion between eternity and time, spiritual life and sensuous life, being and becoming. St Paul in a well-known passage said, The things that are seen are temporal, and the things that are not seen eternal. We composite creatures have a visible part which is temporal, and an invisible part which is not of time but of eternity ; and therefore, although our spiritual life is quickened in baptism, and becomes conscious at conversion, there is then the awakening or unveiling of what in reality is prior to baptism and even to birth.

A man may think of himself as chiefly made of flesh and blood, and thus identify himself with that which cometh for a little while, and soon passeth away and it is gone ; but the Real Divine Man that constitutes our true being as God sees us, and as we ought to see ourselves, has eternal life, and is created by God in eternity in His own image, and became flesh, in time, at what we call our birthday.

Our real man is born of God in eternity, and our true relation to God is best expressed by saying that we are sons of God. We cannot be too careful of our definitions here There is a gulf between the Christian and pantheistic doctrine. We are not partial manifestations of God whose destiny it is to rise above all distinction and separateness until we are merged in God ; nor is the distinction between God and us maya ; nor is it our destiny to overcome our creatureliness and become gods.

God creates us in eternity in His own image, giving us a share in His divine nature ; and His creation is a separation and distinction of the creature from the Creator in order that the creature may find his highest blessedness in a union with the Creator, perfect only if the distinction is permanent. The moment the distinction is blurred, mushed, or denied, we are plunged into pantheism, and the special witness of Christianity is lost in old night.

We have seen that Jesus did not think that all human beings were fundamentally equal. There are many accidental inequalities that must pass away, but there remains a difference which is marked in eternity. We are not concerned in pointing out the varying values of men and women, but it is important for Christians to realise the distinction between themselves and Christ. There are many statements that are true of Christ that each one of us may also truly make.

I came forth from the Father, and am come into the world: again, I leave the world, and go to the Father.[1]

Before Abraham was, I am.[2]

I and my Father are one.[3]

These passages, appropriated by us, might seem to obliterate the distinction, or make it only one of degree; but there is a real, sharp, abiding distinction that the best theology has always made when it has insisted that Christ's Sonship is the ground of our sonship, and therefore our sonship stands in His Eternal Sonship.

The great cycle of our eternal life is from God to God.

> Our birth is but a sleeping and forgetting:
> The soul that rises with us, our life's star,
> Hath had elsewhere its setting,
> And cometh from afar:
> Not in entire forgetfulness,
> And not in utter nakedness,
> But trailing clouds of glory do we come
> From God who is our home:
> Heaven lies about us in our infancy.[4]

The earth-life, with its human joys and sorrows, its dark seasons of temptation and hard-won victories, its sharp pains and wisdom slowly distilled from the experience that each day brings, is caught up into the cycle of the eternal life, until it yields us enriched with foreign travel back on to the bosom of God.

Our supreme concern is with the little span of our earthly life. There are innumerable books dealing with the soul's condition before birth and after death. Here a word of caution is necessary. In the vast intricate systems of theosophical and rosicrucian cosmo-conceptions, it is only too easy for the young soul drawn by the glamour to lose itself, and become indifferent to this world and its concerns. It learns to speak

[1] John xvi. 28. [2] John viii. 58.
[3] John x. 30. [4] Wordsworth, *Ode on Immortality*.

about advanced souls and elementary souls, and sure that itself is advanced, becomes possessed with a spiritual pride subtle as an oriental scent. There are many kinds of other-worldliness against which we must guard ourselves, and our truest wisdom will lie in keeping a sane proportion, and valuing aright each golden day of this life.

An inquiry into the origin of the soul brings us into the thick of many old half-forgotten controversies. The traducianist believed that the soul, like the body, was generated from the parents; and it was easy for him to account for original sin. The creatianist believed that each soul was a new creation direct from the hands of God, but incomplete apart from the body, its organ and instrument. This doctrine fitted in best with the doctrine of the future resurrection of the body, and was generally accepted by the Church, which condemned the doctrine of pre-existence at the Second Council of Constantinople. Happily we, in the English Church, are permitted to believe that general councils 'may err, and sometimes have erred,'[1] and therefore if the theories of creatianism and traducianism strike us as inadequate, we are at liberty to fall back on the far older and more satisfactory doctrine accepted by Plato, Philo, Plotinus, and expressed in our time by Wordsworth with such wonderful beauty, that though our body is of time, our real Divine Self is of Eternity, and it is drawn into its appropriate vehicle by the universal law of affinity.

Whether we regard the new-born babe as a child of God, or a child of wrath, will depend upon our standpoint and our dogmatic prejudices. In Christian countries the babe is early brought to Holy Baptism, which is the authoritative declaration to the parents (and much they need it) that their child is the child of God, and that, grafted by baptism into the Body of Christ's Church, it has entered into the rich treasury of the Church's life and experience.

For a time the whole responsibility for the child falls upon the parents, specially the mother. She, if she is wise, will not shirk the responsibility, but will undertake the work of training, which demands infinite love and patience, and for which there is no short cut. If she holds steadily the faith that her child came forth from God, she will interpret its importunity, aggressiveness, and passions, so inconvenient to herself and her nerves, as evidence of vitality, which, properly directed, will drive the child to future greatness. A merely

[1] Prayer Book, Article XXI.

selfish and flimsy mother will take the short cut of banishing the child to the nursery, or trying to break its will, and thus render it unfit for the battle of life.

Sooner or later the mother's faith will devolve upon the child, and amid its thousand contrary impulses it will have to decide whether it regards itself as a human animal of flesh and blood, or a creature made in God's image. Usually the child passes through the first fourteen years of its life healthily and naturally, although up to the ages of seven or nine, not a few children have intimations of their heavenly origin, and their apprehension of spiritual realities is more of sight than of faith. In our enlightened England if the child speaks of such intimations it is promptly ridiculed and discouraged, and it learns to keep to itself its knowledge of the things that the elders have long since forgotten.

Conversion may take place at any time, but most frequently at adolescence. Puberty awakens the physical life, and adolescence lets loose such a bewildering whirlwind of passion and impulses, that the subject, who has had any deep experience of spiritual realities, feels that its innate love of righteousness is outraged by its actual deeds, and with this there arises a sharp sense of sin. There is no good in hurrying or worrying a soul at such a crisis. Parents have a fine capacity for tormenting their children just when by silence and sympathy they might be a great help. Leave well alone, and the youth, though rebellious against all ordinances of man or God, will by degrees learn to identify his will and faith with his still persistent, diviner self ; and if, when he is suffering the torments of a divided will, he is brought to see the significance of the suffering Christ on the Cross, he will make the great surrender of love to the Divine Atoner, and in his whole-willed self-offering find himself and his God. This is conversion. It is the unveiling and realisation of the Real Divine Self, and henceforth the man knows that he has eternal life.

This knowledge often comes quite suddenly, and it is one of the most wonderful, inspiring, gladdening things in life. Religion passes out of the realm of opinion into that of experience. The soul gains a glimpse of the end, and can never forget her vision. For a while, it may be, faith has become sight, the opposing powers of sin and evil vanish, and it seems a mistake to speak of life as a prolonged conflict ; for with the wonder and mystery of the eternal life the soul mounts up with wings like an eagle, not dreaming that she must come down to earth

again, and learn to run and not be weary, and to walk and not faint.

The soul needs the heavenly glimpse as a fine memory to carry her through the dark days that follow. After eternal life comes the judgment, which is a long process of discerning, sifting, dividing. Adolescence has let loose the gay and varied life of the senses, which in their turn fire the passions. The soul perceives that she is plunged into the torrential life of becoming ; and distracted between the many opposing forces knows not how to effect harmony amid such discordant elements.

Here is the time when confession and a wise spiritual guide would be welcome ; but our spiritual guides are not agreed, and the soul's sensitiveness gives them, too often, an opportunity for adding to her torments. Let every young man and young woman grasp the fact once for all that their warring passions are not evil, that they are simply fiery energies given that they may bring them into order and use them as the propelling power to drive them into the haven.

The divine self, conscious of eternal life, is the organiser. It works by the God-given powers of imagination and will, but it needs to remember that in itself it can do nothing. When God creates man in His own image in eternity, He makes it a law of his creaturely life that he can live only in humble dependence upon the Creator.

Any assertion of independent life or will shuts off the divine influx, and spiritual death follows.

This is the lesson that must be burnt into man by the fires of judgment. It is not necessary that the soul, conscious of impotence, should turn round on herself and call herself a worm or a reptile ; for it is not true, and opprobrious names discourage her. A fish floundering on a dry bank has not time to pant to itself that it is a shrimp ; it must use every energy to get back into the water. Let the soul floundering, dismayed, shamed, get back into God, and her will and imagination will then be set free to correlate the passions, and bring them into obedience to the divine self. The creative or art instinct, which is the deepest of the Real Man, will fashion the emotional and passional life into union with the spiritual life ; and when the sensuous life of becoming is one with the eternal life of the soul, she will include them in her self-offering and worship, which is her true religious life.

This is the second great crisis in the spiritual life, recognised by the Church, and for which she provides in the solemn

laying on of hands that the candidate may be wholly cleansed from sin, and endued with power, by the full gift of the Holy Ghost. Baptism, which is not complete apart from conversion, places the individual in a Body where he is in direct relation with God and his brother. He lives fully only in so far as his self-offering to God is complete ; but service is the end, and self-surrender to God must be continually passing into self-sacrifice for man, not only that the work of the spiritual world may be done, but that the religious soul may be saved from selfish spiritual intoxication.

Effectual service cannot be learnt in a day. It is natural that the soul tasting of spiritual things for the first time should feel a generous prompting to rush to another and tell the good news ; but one has only to imagine what would have happened if the disciples of Jesus had not waited together in prayer upon God, in order to perceive that much preparation and training is needful for useful service. The disciples' preparation was intensest between Good Friday and the Day of Pentecost, when they passed through their day of judgment, its completion being marked by a mighty outpouring of the Holy Ghost, which endued them with power for their apostolic work.

The Church at once proceeded to bestow the gift of the Holy Ghost on those ripe for it by the laying on of hands ; and those who recognise the value of the Church's order are invited to present themselves for Confirmation that they may receive the same holy gift. Confirmation was a taking over into the present of one of the 'last things.' The Baptism of the Holy Ghost, for which it stood, was to be the immediate prelude to the Day of Wrath, and it was to anoint the elect to their Royal Priesthood in the coming Kingdom.

The Apostles believed that Pentecost was the beginning of the end. We do not believe that the end is yet in sight, but we do not need to wait for it ; for whenever we yield ourselves wholly to God, we may through the apostolic rite of Confirmation receive our anointing of the Holy Spirit, which enables us already to minister as Kings and Priests in the present invisible Kingdom.

God's call is to holiness, which means wholeness of spirit, soul, and body.

Holiness is too often thought of as a colourless perfection. It is the direct reverse. Holiness is obedience to the law of eternal life, and it brings out all the form and colour which are hidden in the individuality of the man made in God's

image. To miss life is sin. To oppose life is the worst kind of religious sin. The man who misses and opposes life renders himself obnoxious to every sin and sickness. Many souls conscious of sins attack them with the full force of their wills. Usually they are beaten in their conflict and brought to despair; but the reason of their failure is that they struggle with effects instead of with causes, and the strongest will in the world cannot alter the effects of causes. To meet the causes of sins effectually there must be a full recognition and confession of the original sin that the man has sought his life apart from God. The confession may be made to God in secret, but if the bewildered and vexed penitent cannot quiet his conscience, he should remember that Jesus taught that God has given to man power on earth to forgive sins, and that it is always possible to go to one set apart by the Church for this purpose and 'open his grief, that by the ministry of God's holy Word he may receive the benefit of absolution, together with ghostly counsel and advice, to the quieting of his conscience, and avoiding of all scruple and doubtfulness.'[1]

With the conscience at rest the soul can proceed to adjust herself towards God. Let her remember that she is made by God for Himself, and that her insatiable desire, which all things fail to satisfy, is a desire arising in eternity for God. The desire of the soul is magnetic, drawing into herself whatsoever she desires until it masters her. As soon as she realises her heavenly origin she should send forth her desire into God, and the instant her desire meets His desire, He is drawn into her, and she receives power to bring forth the Real Man hidden within.

The life of union with God is maintained by faith, which always searches for the truth on which to rest and build. Faith cannot be a basis—madness lies that way;[2] but truth is the strong rock foundation on which faith can rely as it goes forward to make the unseen things real and substantial to the soul.

Besides dealing with sin, the renewed life has to take account of the body and its sicknesses. Man has a spiritual body and a natural body. The spiritual body is the appropriate clothing of the spiritual man, it is immortal and incorruptible, and, being of a subtler substance than the natural body, is able to penetrate it and hold it together during its incessant changes. When the vitality of the natural body is low, it becomes an

[1] Prayer Book, The Communion Service.
[2] See William Cowper.

easy prey to sickness and disease ; but its vitality can be enormously heightened by the spiritual life, which, if abounding, quickens the mortal body, and enables it to fight successfully against microbes, and render them harmless if they have already found an entrance.

The spiritual body does not accept the services of the natural body to the uttermost and then rudely spurn it at death.[1] The Church's Creeds have always insisted on the ' resurrection of the body,' the ' resurrection of the flesh.'

But we have seen how she has put the resurrection, judgment, and the whole eschatological vision of Jesus into the future. It has been our effort, following in the wake of the Fourth Gospel, to get at the inner truth of eschatology by seeing the last things as vital processes of the present ; and when we apply this principle to the resurrection of the body, we see that the spirit is not destined to grope in churchyards and cemeteries, or in the depths of the sea, for some dusty remains of its former earth-body, that it may transmute it into the substance of its spiritual body, and thus redeem it ; rather, the process of transmutation proceeds all through the earth-life, the spiritual body feeding on the live natural body, and finding in it all it needs for its ultimate spiritual perfection. St Thomas Aquinas said that the perfected spirit did not require much matter from the old body. That is true, but it must be of the best. This it gets when a man, like Christ, lives in the faith that his natural body is a temple of the Holy Ghost.

To proceed with the Church order. When a man has given himself wholly to God, and has been filled with the Holy Ghost in Confirmation, he is then bidden to draw near, and to make his Communion with his Lord through and by means of the Holy Sacrament of the Church's Bread and Wine.

In this Service, ordained by Christ, his whole need, spiritual, bodily, mental, is met and satisfied. Love to Christ constrains a man to make a memorial of the Sacrifice on the cross. As he contemplates the Redeemer, he is drawn to make a full offering of himself, soul and body, and all that he has, his bread and wine, and his alms, his prayers and his worship, to the heavenly Father, until in the solemn, historical act of partaking of the consecrated Bread and Wine he is drawn up into the heavenly life and worship, and with the angels and archangels, and all the glorious company of heaven, joins in adoration of

[1] Apostles' Creed, I believe in . . . the Resurrection of the body ; in the Baptismal Service it says ' the flesh.'

the Lamb slain before the foundation of the world, and of the Eternal Father of us all.

Thus, every phase and need of our eternal life is provided for in the Church. Yet there is a danger. The tendency of the Church is to foster the spirit of religiousness, which is the exclusive worship of the past ; and when it possesses a man destroys the life in his soul more quickly than anything else in the world, blinding him to true values, and making him a zealous persecutor of those who worship the living God. Religious sins are the only mortal sins. Jesus Christ, realising that religiousness turned human men and women into monsters, in the freshness of His youth and enthusiasm, threw Himself against it, and fought it to the bitter end. It was Life against religion, Christ against the world. Religion crucified the Life ; but He won ; for His death redeemed religion, carrying it over from the worship of the past to the hope and creation of the future.

And so when our religion is caught up and redeemed in our eternal life, our gaze is turned from the past towards the future. Not that we despise the past. On the contrary, we reverence the past for the rich inheritance that it quietly and generously hands over to us. We could live on its good things even if we lived as long as Methuselah ; but not only grateful enjoyment and assimilation of the past is our portion, we are put here to become creators of the future, and that is possible only when we honour the past, live in the present, and work by faith for the future. For this reason we pay due reverence to our Mother the Church. She has nursed us and brought us up, she has taught us and chastened us, she continues to nourish us with her Bread and her Wine, to bind up our wounds, and to encourage and strengthen us in the hour of death. Yet in our loyalty to her we must not be tied to her apron-strings. Woman, what have I to do with thee ? Mine hour is not yet come. Our gaze is towards the future, and the future holds the Kingdom. As the eternal life of our soul deepens we shall see ever more clearly that it can be perfected and abounding only in the larger life of the Kingdom, and the Kingdon can come only as eternal life is manifested in our bodies, our homes, our states, and our nations. Just now, with all the world in a maze, that prospect may seem farther off than ever ; but we need to remember that we are not alone. Jesus trod the winepress alone. His vision did not give any hope for the saving of Jerusalem and the perman-

ence of the Temple, and the world at large was witnessing the sure and swift decay of the Holy Roman Empire ; yet He reached forward in His great strength, and died that the Kingdom might come. His sacrifice was not in vain. The Church was born of the travail of His soul, and she has been the most inspiring institution in the world's history. Again the trumpet sounds, and we are called in a body to go forward, remembering that we are in the great fellowship of the spirits of just men made perfect who are working with us. We and they, with Christ at our head, are marching forward to a victorious future, and as we utter the prayer He taught us, Thy Kingdom come, we may assuredly believe that some time and somehow our prayer will be answered, the Kingdom will come, and we shall behold the King

# INDEX


Abel, 54
Abelard, 1–3, 4, 7, 133, 135, 164
Absolution, 182
Acts, Book of, 90, 147, 157
Adam and Eve, 142
Adolescence, 179–80
Agnosticism, 12
Alexander III, 104
Alexandrian Jews, 95
Ancient of Days, 24
Andrew, 34, 40
Anselm, St, 3, 170, 173
  on Atonement, 131–5
Apocalypse, the, 147, 167, 170
Apocalyptic Christ, 118
  literature, 19–25
  teaching, 119
Apollinaris, 120
Apollyon, 171
Apostles' Creed, 140
Apostolical succession, 155
Aquinas, St Thomas, 113, 142, 183
Arius, 120
Art, 8, 12, 65, 164
Aristocracy, 46
Ascension, the, 61, 147–51
Ascetic life, 52
Atonement, the, 62, 125–38
*Atonement and Personality*, 137
Augustine, St, 3, 103
Authority, 1, 6, 19, 64, 71, 73

Balaam, 15
Balzac, 50
Baptism, Holy, 156–9, 178
  of Jesus, 27
Barabbas, 81, 82
Bartholomew, 40, 50
Bartimaeus, 68
Baur, 10
Beatitudes, 42
Beelzebub, 41
Bergson, 166
Berlin, 53
Bernard, St, 1–3, 4, 90, 164
Bethany, 69, 70, 78
Bethsaida, 53, 55
Bible, the, 5, 6, 12
Blake, William, 53, 96, 135
Blood, 54, 56
Body, spiritual, 182–3
Bousset, 11
Brethren, Plymouth, 96
Browning, Robert, 170
Bunyan, John, 109
Butler, Samuel, 140

Caesarea Philippi, 60, 62
Cain, 54
Calvin, 6, 90, 111, 166
Capernaum, 32, 35, 47, 53, 63, 65
Catherine of Siena, St, 90, 125
Catholicism, 4–9, 164
Celibacy, 174
Charles V, Emperor, 4
Chorazin, 53
Christ of experience, 121–4
Christian science, 120
  socialism, 46
Christology, 116–21
Church, the, 61, 93, 96, 102, 103, 140, 141, 142, 152–61, 167, 180, 181, 184, 185
  of England, 6
  of Rome, 19, 142
Church's ministry, 154–5
  memory, 162
  sacraments, 155–60
City of God, 167
Communion of Saints, 151
Confession, 182
Confirmation, 181
Conscience, 136
Conservatism, 162

Constantinople, Second Council of, 178
Consubstantiation, 5
Conversion, 179
Corinthians, Epistle to, 91
Council of Trent, 5
Creatianism, 178
Creative imagination, 16
Creeds, 120
Criticism, 10, 105
*Cur Deus Homo*, 131–5

Dalmanutha, 58, 59
Daniel, 21, 22, 100
Dante, 90
David, 16, 75, 95
Day of Judgment, 168
of Wrath, 28
Death, 53–4, 56
Deists, 98
Demonology, 171
Demons, 171
Devil, the, 165, 170–1
Diet of Worms, 4, 163

Election, 165, 166–7
Elijah, 26, 52, 56, 58, 60, 65, 83, 85, 141, 147, 148
Eliot, George, 11, 96
Enoch, 20, 23, 24, 56, 141, 147, 148, 152
Ephesians, Epistle to, 116, 149
Ephesus, 95
Erasmus, 6
Eschatology, 98, 99, 102, 165–74
Eternal life, 175–85
Eutyches, 120
Ezekiel, 19

Faith, 71
Feeding of the five thousand, 55
Fox, George, 6
Francis of Assisi, St, 90
Frederick Barbarossa, 103
Frederick the Great, 8
Free-will, 136

Gadara, 46, 47
Gadarene swine, 47
Galatians, Epistle to, 91
Gamaliel, 38, 92
Garden of Eden, 147
Gennesaret, 58
Gentiles, 88, 90, 93
Germany, 6, 10, 11, 112
German critics, 10–12
Gethsemane, 79
Gnosticism, 120
Goethe, 8, 9, 50, 135
Gospel, the, 32, 33, 34
of St John, 89–90, 122–4
Great War, the, 96, 112
Greece, 21
Gregory VII, 103, 104
Grote, 6
*Guide to the Perplexed*, 14

Hades, 147
Haggai, 17
Harnack, 10, 90
Healing, 172–3
Heaven, 165, 167–8
Hebrews, Epistle to, 94, 130–1, 149–50
Hell, 165, 168, 169
Herodians, 73
Higher criticism, 105
Hildebrandine Popes, 111
Hillel, 37
History, 10, 12
Holiness, 181
Holy Ghost, 41
Holy of Holies, 150
*Human Personality and its Survival of Bodily Death*, 171
Huxley, 140

Illusion, 28, 107
Individualism, 164
Infallibility, 6–7, 19
Innocent III, 104
Inquisition, 161
Inspiration, 14, 15
Institutionalism, 162
Isaiah, 17, 26, 27, 28, 45–51, 52
Israel, 32, 33, 45, 50, 51, 57, 60, 61, 62, 84, 85, 87, 90, 91, 93, 102, 105, 153, 158, 159, 161

Jairus, 47, 48
James, St, 34, 40, 48, 49, 57, 68, 76, 79
Epistle of, 93–4
James, St, son of Alphaeus, 40
Jeremiah, 15, 17, 166
Jericho, 68
Jerusalem, 68, 69, 76
Jesus Christ, 10, 11, 12, 14, 15, 26, 27, 28; His baptism and temptation, 30–1; His Galilean ministry, 32; His message,

32; calls His first disciples, 34; and case of exorcism, 35; heals Peter's wife's mother, 35; cleanses a leper, 36; meets Roman centurion, 36; heals paralytic, 37; calls Levi, 37; in a cornfield on Sabbath, 40; completes number of apostles, 40; and His relations, 41; and multitude, 43; teaches in parables, 44–5; at Gadara, 47; and Jairus, and woman with issue of blood, 47, 48; goes home, 48; sends out apostles to preach, 49–51; His tour of the cities, 51; on the Baptist, 52; heals deaf and dumb, 55; heals blind man, 55; Jesus transfigured, 57; on signs, 59; and Syrophenician woman, 60; and atonement, 62; on citizenship, 63; and a child, 63–4; on forgiveness, 64; on divorce, 65–6; and little children, 66; and rich young man, 67; and Bartimaeus, 68; at Bethany, 69; entry into Jerusalem, 69; and fig-tree, 70; in the temple, 70; and babes, 70; on prayer, 70–71; and sinners, 72–3; and tribute money, 74; on resurrection, 74; denounces the Pharisees, 75–6; lament over Jerusalem, 76; and poor widow, 76; and temple buildings, 76; and second coming, 77–8; at the last supper, 78–9; Gethsemane, 79; betrayed by Judas, 80; before Caiaphas, 80; before Pilate, 81; on the cross, 82; death, 83; as King of Israel, 84–5; as Servant of Jehovah, 86; flower of Israel, 87; as Master of the mystical life, 89; according to James, 94; as seen in Epistle to the Hebrews, 94; and the Kingdom, 98–112; who He was, 113–24; and the atonement, 125–38; and the resurrection, 139–46; and the ascension, 147–51; His priesthood, 149–50; and the sacraments, 155–60; Redeemer of Religion, 184
*Jesus of Nazara*, Keim's, 11
Jinn, 170
Joanna, 44
Joel, 18, 19, 26
John, St, 34, 40, 48, 49, 57, 64, 68, 76, 79, 89–90, 117, 119, 122–4, 144, 147, 157–8
gospel of, 89–90, 148, 149, 159, 165, 168, 175
John the Baptist, St, 25–8, 45, 51, 53, 54, 60, 71, 72, 85, 101, 152
Josedech, 18
Joseph, 45, 95
Judaism, 8, 14, 94, 95, 135
Judas Iscariot, 40, 50, 78, 80
Judas the Galilean, 33

KANT, 8
Keim, 11
King of the Jews, 82
Kingdom of Heaven, 22, 25, 26, 27, 32–3, 34, 41, 42, 43, 44, 45, 52–6, 57, 60, 61, 63, 64, 67, 72, 75, 77, 79, 82–6, 88, 89, 90, 93, 96, 98–112, 143, 145, 148, 151, 152, 153, 155, 156, 157, 158, 159, 160, 161, 163, 164, 165–8, 175, 180
of Satan, 170

LAST Supper, 100, 159–60, 183
Law, the, 14, 39–40, 75
Lazarus, 69
*Leben Jesu*, Strauss, 11
Lecky, 7
Leo X, 4
Lessing, 8
Leviathan, 171
Logos, 116–17
Loisy, 10
London, 53
Lord's Supper, 100, 159–60, 183
Luke, St, 61, 87–8, 139, 147
Luther, 4–7, 90, 93, 111, 163
Lutheranism, 6
*Lux Mundi*, 137

MACHIAVELLI, 112
Malachi, 18, 26
Maimonides, 14, 135
Marcion, 120
Mark, St, 84, 86–87, 97, 147, 158
Martha, 69, 144
Mary, mother of James and Joses, 44
Mary, sister of Martha, 69
Mary Magdalene, 44
Matter, 9

Matthew, St, 40, 84, 85, 97, 139, 147
Maurice, F. D., 112
Melchisedec, 95
Messiah, the, 16–18, 22–5, 27, 29, 30, 33, 45, 55, 58, 60, 75, 81, 99, 139
Messianic idea, 114
Kingdom, 16, 17
Table, 156
Methodists, 96
Milton, John, 170
Mind, 9
Ministry, 154–5
Miracles, 86, 139, 171–4
Moberly, Dr, 137
Modernism, 135
Moore, George, 140
Moses, 14, 45, 57, 66, 75, 99, 125, 147
Myers, Frederic, 171

Nathaniel, 50
Nativity, the, 61, 87
Nazareth, 32, 42, 48–9, 102
Neander, 11
Neoplatonists, 89
Neri, St Philip, 5
Nestorius, 120
Newman, J. H., 11, 112
New Testament, 9, 11, 104, 141, 166, 167
New Theology, 120
Nicodemus, 108
Nietzsche, 9
Nietzschean, the, 43, 105

Old Testament, 104, 154, 165
Olives, Mount of, 79
Original sin, 173

Papacy, the, 5, 7, 103, 104
Parables, 44–6
Paradise, 83, 147
*Paradise Lost*, 170
Parents, 179
Paris, 53
Parousia, 93, 148
Passion, 180
Paul, St, 14, 90–3, 114–16, 122, 125, 127–9, 134, 137, 139, 142, 143, 146, 147, 148, 149, 150, 153, 154, 165, 175
Paulus, Dr, 140
Pentecost, 153, 181
Personality, 44, 136
Peter, St, 34, 35, 40, 48, 49, 57, 61, 62, 63, 64, 65, 76, 79, 80–1, 90, 93, 141, 142, 146, 152, 153
Pharisees, 26, 37–8, 39, 40, 44, 58, 59, 65, 71–3, 74–6
Philip, St, 40, 50
Philippians, Epistle to, 115
Philo, 95, 116, 178
Philosophy, 12
Pilate, Pontius, 81, 82
*Pilgrims' Progress*, 109, 171
'Pippa,' 50
Plato, 95, 178
Plotinus, 178
Power of words, 36, 46
Prayer, 58, 71
Predestination, 46, 165, 166–7
Pre-existence, 178
Prodigal son, 72, 133
Prophecy, 172
Prophets, 14, 15, 16, 19, 20, 21, 43, 75
Propitiation, 134
Protestantism, 4, 5, 9, 162
Puberty, 179
Purgatory, 169

Quakers, 6, 96

Rahab, 171
Rationalism, 7
Reason, 12
Reformation, the, 93, 104, 111, 135, 163
Reimarus, 10
Religion, 8, 10, 12, 13, 65, 164, 179
Religiousness, 162, 184
Renaissance, Italian, 104
Renan, 10
Resurrection, 61, 74–5, 139–46, 147, 148, 183
Revelation, 19
Roman Catholic Church, 160, 161, 162
Romans, Epistle to, 149

Sabbath, 40
Sadducees, 26, 74, 143
Samaria, 65
Samson, 113
Satisfaction, 133–5
Scepticism, 10
Schoolmen, 173
Schopenhauer, 9
Schweitzer, 12
Science, 9, 10, 12

Scriptures, 6
Sea of Tiberias, 34
Sens, Cathedral at, 2
Sermon on the Mount, 111
Seven Heavens, 148
Shakespeare, 50, 96
Sidon, 60
Signs, 87
'Silas Marner,' 50
Simeon's Song, 88
Simon the Canaanite, 40
Simon the Leper, 78
Simple Christianity, 6
Socialism, 167
Son of Man, 23, 24, 25, 51, 63, 68, 79, 135
Spanish Jews, 95
Spinoza, 8, 9, 94, 135
Spiritualism, 171
State, 6, 103, 111, 112, 164
Strauss, 10, 11
Steward, unjust, 73
Strindberg, 9
Superman, 105
Susannah, 44

TAGORE, 115
Temptation of Jesus, 30–1
Tetzel, 4
Thaddaeus, 40
Thaumaturgy, 172
Theosophy, 115, 120
Theosophists, 148
Thessalonians, Epistle to, 91
Tholuck, 11
Thomas, St, 40, 50
Tiamat, 171
Tolstoi, 109
Traducianism, 178
Transfiguration, 145
Transcendence, 174
Transubstantiation, 5
Tribulation, 62, 63, 77
Trinity, Holy, 9
Tubingen School, 12
Tyre, 60

UNION with God, 182
Unitarianism, 120

VALENTINUS, 120
Venice, 104
Verbal inspiration, 14, 99
Vicar of Christ, 104
of Peter, 104
Vicarious suffering, 16
Victorian period, 11
Vineyard, 72
Virgin Birth, 140, 146, 173–4
Voltaire, 8

WAR, Great, 96, 112
Wisdom, 52
Wittenberg, 4
Wordsworth, 177, 178
Worms, Diet of, 4, 163
Wrede, 10, 12

ZECHARIAH, 18, 19
Zerubbabel, 17
Zwingli, 6

Printed by SPOTTISWOODE, BALLANTYNE & CO. LTD.
Colchester, London & Eton, England

22298